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THE MUSIC REVIEW

Edited by GEOFFREY SHARP

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Some Aspects of Form in the Symphonies of Sibelius

BY

WILLIAM G. HILL

It is only to be expected that the critical account of the work of a living composer will be treated with a certain amount of hesitancy. This diffidence arises from various causes. Until the list of works is complete it is obvious that no definitive study can be made. If the work contains novelties of treatment it is apt to be some time before these novelties can be discussed with anything approaching complete assurance. One hesitates to commit oneself when the evidence is not all in; and even then, first criticism is pretty sure to be subject to more or less drastic editing.

In the case of Sibelius it is fairly certain that the evidence is now in. He is living, but has not produced major works for about 15 years, nor at his age is he likely to do so. His long awaited eighth Symphony, at least once even announced for performance, would certainly have made its appearance before this if the composer deemed it worthy of his name. It will eventually appear as a posthumous work—if it has not already been destroyed—and over it critics will appropriately hold post-mortems. But until quite recently there was no discussion of his work with any claim to definitiveness. Several small volumes had appeared that dealt for the most part with biographical matters. Prior to the appearance of a work entitled *The Music of Sibelius*,* a collection of essays by various authors, under the editorship of Gerald Abraham, the principal works that dealt with the music itself at all extensively were the *Sibelius* of Cecil Gray,¹ and the same author's *Sibelius: the Symphonies*,² a brief monograph in the Musical Pilgrim Series. In addition, a chapter or two in Constant Lambert's *Music Ho!* contain suggestive comment. Gray enjoys a reputation that should give his opinions a certain weight, and deference has been accorded them during the 15 years or so since the first-mentioned book's appearance. Indeed, programme notes dealing with Sibelius' works have been largely quotations from Gray, acknowledged or not, ever since that time.

One of the statements made by Gray concerning the Sibelius symphonies, and one that has been taken over and enlarged upon by numerous other commentators, is that the themes on which these works are built, instead of being stated in complete form from the first, are given out in small bits tentatively, or as clues thrown out in a mystery story as "leaders" or deliberately to mislead, to be brought together only at the end. There the themes, as in

* Published in England as *Sibelius* (Lindsay Drummond). For review see *THE MUSIC REVIEW*, X, p. 65 [Ed.].

¹ 2nd ed., 1938. Oxford University Press.

² 1935, Oxford University Press.

the denouement of the story, finally freed of misunderstanding, make at last a clear statement. As Constant Lambert expresses it:

"Instead of being presented with a *fait accompli* of a theme that is then analysed and developed in fragments, we are presented with several enigmatic fragments that only become a *fait accompli* on the final page. It is like watching a sculptured head being built up from an armature with little pellets of clay or, to put it more vulgarly, it is like a detective story in which the reader does not know until the final chapter whether the blotting paper or the ashtray throws more light on the discovery of the corpse in the library."³

This is certainly theoretically an interesting possibility, but one that would put almost insuperable difficulties in the way of its practical realization. It seems all right at first, but is its rightness not a purely *literary* rightness? Patterns in sound do not arrange themselves effectively in the ways that are effective for other media. The intangibility of sound makes necessary the establishment of a "taking off place" to which reference is made from time to time in order to give musical form its requisite solidity.

The present writer, then, took up a special study of Sibelius to find out for himself whether the composer had actually made effective use of this procedure, or indeed whether he had used it at all. In the course of this study he has been able not only to throw some light on this point but to discover some other characteristics of Sibelius' forms that may be worth recording. Indeed, these other characteristics loom larger as we progress and reduce the original inquiry to the status merely of the catalytic agent that started the reaction. There is no time in a brief essay to take up all these points in detail. Consequently the discussion will be limited for the most part to an analysis of the fourth Symphony and, in greatest detail, the third movement of that work, which in its relatively brief length illustrates more or less well most of the points to be made.

Study of the symphonies reveals only three individual movements that can be said in any sense to bear out Gray's contention, and these suggest rather than exemplify his thesis. These three are the first movement of the second Symphony, the third movement of the Third, and the third movement of the Fourth; of these only the last makes consistent use of the method. It is to be noted that this movement is not built in sonata-form but in a kind of rondo-like variation, and consequently this treatment is more natural and less novel than it might otherwise have been.

But before we look at this example more closely there are a few more of Gray's pronouncements that must be brought forward so that their value may be judged in the light of what follows. On pages 161-2 of *Sibelius*, Gray has the following to say:

"The first thing that strikes one about Sibelius' symphonies viewed as a whole is their astonishing range and diversity. Each one is sharply differentiated from all the others; each has a definite character of its own. Similarly, within each individual symphony one finds the same strong contrast between the constituent movements. They bear a spiritual relationship to each other, but they are always formally independent, self-sufficient entities, capable of standing alone by themselves. This is

³ *Music Ho!* A study of music in decline. London, Faber and Faber, Ltd., 1934.

largely in consequence of the composer's consistent *avoidance of thematic interconnection between the movements*.⁴ It is true that in the First Symphony we find the theme of the introduction to the first movement recurring at the beginning of the last, but one can hardly say that the two movements are thematically connected, for the melody in question plays no part in the subsequent proceedings in the first movement, and only a very small one in the last. Still, it is significant to note that, after toying tentatively with this device in his First Symphony, he then resolutely discarded it and henceforth uncompromisingly maintained the structural integrity of all the separate movements. *One partial exception only may be found in the Fourth Symphony, where a phrase which occurs near the end of the third movement bears a definite, though possibly accidental, resemblance to that with which the last movement begins*,⁴ but as it only appears the once in each movement, and plays no thematic role in either, one cannot say that there is any real relation between the two movements."

Again, on page 158, he says:

"... Corollarily, it follows that the device of linking together the several movements of a symphony into one vast whole, under the autocracy of a constantly recurring *leitmotiv*—or "motto" theme, as it is often called—constitutes a betrayal of the innermost spirit of the symphonic style. Indeed, any interchange of thematic material between the movements is alien to it, for the treatment in each movement of the thematic material proper to it should be so complete and exhaustive as to afford no scope or excuse for its introduction into another. If it is not complete and exhaustive the movement is logically and structurally imperfect, while if it is so the repetition of its material elsewhere becomes organically superfluous and rhetorical merely. In either case the result is aesthetically unsatisfactory, and the faults of most modern symphonic writing can be in large part traced to this tendency to break down the frontiers of the separate movements. . . ."

Now there might be some quarrel with the reasoning set forth in these quotations. Just why it should be considered a fault for the various movements in one work to show some kind of unity other than a "spiritual relationship", and more tangible than that rather mystical affinity, does not appear; and why the absolute independence of the individual movements would not destroy the unity of the work as a whole is a matter that is equally elusive. Nevertheless Gray, who makes of Sibelius almost a demigod, argues this deity in part from an alleged refusal to "betray" thus what he calls the "innermost spirit of the symphonic style". The present writer, who has come to possess an enormous respect for Sibelius in the course of this study, would do so for almost diametrically opposed reasons. Gray makes a large claim for Sibelius when he says that he

"will ultimately prove to have been, not only the greatest of his generation, but one of the major figures in the entire history of music", and continues: "Such an extreme and challenging statement, I am well aware, is likely to arouse a considerable amount of surprise, dissent, and even derision in certain quarters. I can only say that it is made with all due deliberation, as the result of a steadily growing conviction which has been in the course of formation over a period of many years, and that is at least based upon a more prolonged and exhaustive study of the music than is likely to have been made by any of those who question it. Above all, it is no mere expression of personal predilection; rather is it true that I have been forced to it, almost against my will and in spite of myself. One after another the more immediately arresting and spectacular figures of the present time engaged my attention and aroused my interest and

⁴ The italics are ours (author).

enthusiasm; one after another they gradually ceased in the last resort to satisfy and hold me, while all the time the figure of Sibelius gradually and imperceptibly grew in stature and significance until now he overshadows them all. Such at any rate has been my own personal experience, and such, I firmly believe, will prove to be the experience of all intelligent musicians and music lovers who are sufficiently acquainted with his work to be able to judge for themselves." (*Op. cit.*, pp. 13 and 14.)

The writer's quarrel with Gray will be not so much with his conclusions as with his course in arriving at them. For he too came to an understanding of Sibelius' importance rather against his will and to his own surprise. The rugged and forbidding exterior of the man's music had not attracted him in what, it must be confessed, had been rather superficial listening. But during the present study he has been won over. It would seem that he should have much in common with Mr. Gray, but actually he finds nearly all of Gray's contentions in regard to the means employed by Sibelius in the construction of his forms to be simply untrue. So, in spite of the fact that they arrive at approximately the same place, Gray's means of arriving there are questioned nearly all the way. If it were not that Mr. Gray's book is accepted so universally it would be of very little consequence what his mistakes might be. But through his many and largely valuable works he has built up a reputation that makes him a seriously misleading guide in matters where he is really at fault.

When this paper was first drafted Gray's books were the only ones that had appeared which discussed the music of Sibelius in any detailed fashion. In November 1947, however, *The Music of Sibelius* was published in the United States. It contains essays on the orchestral and theatre music, the chamber music, the songs and the piano music, each written by a specialist of sorts—the most important subject, that of the symphonies, being treated by Professor Abraham himself. This book goes into the description and criticism of the music in much more detailed fashion than does Gray. Professor Abraham explicitly calls attention to some of Gray's errors but goes on to analyses that, in the opinion of the present writer, are only less faulty than Gray's own. If I may presume to state my case, it may be found that I have at least another and perhaps significant viewpoint. In the time limits that this paper imposes, we cannot possibly treat all aspects of the problem and shall consequently concentrate on those points on which we are in most serious disagreement with Mr. Gray and the rest. Let us then proceed to an analysis, as complete as space will permit, of the fourth Symphony—the third movement to receive our most detailed examination.

Tonally the several movements are in the following keys: A minor, F major, C# minor and A major. Thus the second and third movements stand in the relation of lower and upper major thirds respectively to the basic A tonality. The first and last movements make use of sonata-allegro form, not deviating too far from regularity; the second movement shows the second rondo form—ABACA—with a richly developed coda; and the third movement makes use of a kind of variation form arranged in a rondo-like manner.

The very first measure of the Symphony brings us into head-on collision with Mr. Gray, for we find stated there a basic motive of the clearest possible

imprint, the basic motive on which, not only the first movement, but the entire Symphony is based (Ex. 1).⁵ This motive, which we may call "x",

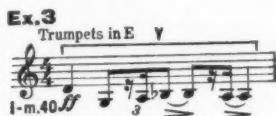


appears constantly in manifold forms and disguises. Any such motive, in addition to its original form, may exhibit that form reversed, or inverted, either forward or backwards, in augmentation or diminution of the whole, or of any part or parts, or lengthened by one or more notes either at the beginning or the end, or curtailed by one or more notes at either end. It may show a stretching or compression of the intervals by an optional amount. Further, any combination of the above variants may appear theoretically, which increases the possibilities of manipulation enormously. Then, in addition, any motive that exhibits a particularly striking and easily identifiable interval between its extreme tones may be manipulated harmonically as well as melodically.

Now, in the case of Sibelius' fourth Symphony, we have all the individually listed variants appearing. They appear not once but constantly, not in one movement but in all four movements, not thematically only but harmonically also. The motive in question comprises four notes of thematically characteristic arrangement on whole-tone intervals, embracing altogether the interval of an augmented fourth. This fourth is treated almost as importantly as is the motive melodically considered. It, the motive, appears in both melodic and harmonic aspects in the first three movements, and then we have the augmented fourth resolving to a perfect fifth as the characteristic motive of the final movement—thus a satisfactory resolution after three movements of suspense (Ex. 2). This motive is actually a combination of the augmented



fourth of "x" with the inverted fifth—rising instead of falling—which is the initial and characteristic interval of a second motive, "y" (Ex. 3). The "y"



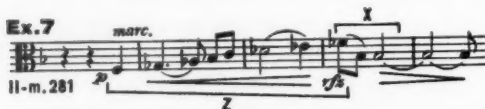
motive makes its first appearance at measure 40 in the first movement, where it is a part of the second subject group. It acts as a second and subsidiary

⁵ It is excessively difficult to write a description of musical occurrences. Examples have been supplied that should clarify the points made, but no examples can take the place of the score.

basic motive, most often represented by its initial fifth but occasionally appearing complete, as in measures 49 and 50 of the third movement. A third basic motive, accessory in nature, makes its first appearance at measure 66 of the first movement, in the first section of the development. This motive may be designated by the letter "z" (Ex. 4). It reappears in all subsequent move-



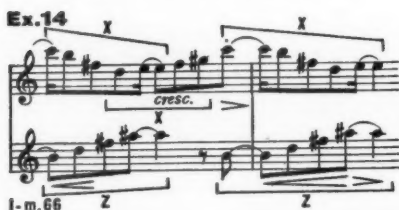
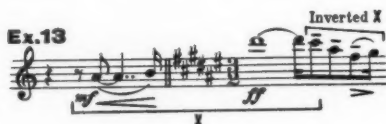
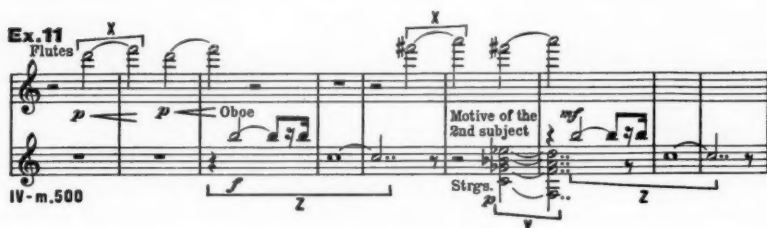
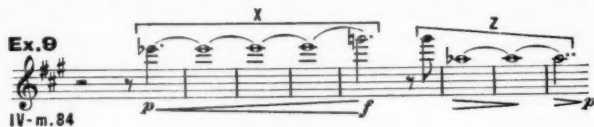
ments and is treated much more importantly in its harmonic than in its melodic aspect. Since its range is the very striking interval of a major seventh it is particularly well suited to this treatment. It appears in both rising and falling aspects. It rises through an arpeggio of a large minor seventh chord⁶ at its first appearance, and rises diatonically at measure 80, where it is combined with an harmonic statement of the "x" motive (Ex. 5). In the second movement it is the most important feature of the coda, where it is used descending,



diatonically for the most part, and again combined with the augmented fourth (or diminished fifth) skip of motive "x" (Ex. 6). It appears similarly, but rising, some measures later (Ex. 7). In the first measure of the third movement motives "x" and "z" stand side by side (Ex. 8). In measure 89 of the fourth movement is a descending leap of a major seventh, preceded by a two note figure which consists merely of notes 2 and 3 of motive "x" (Ex. 9). This fact is made abundantly clear in measure 369 and following where, after

⁶ Bernhard Ziehn's terminology. A seventh chord spanning a major seventh and of which the 1st, 3rd and 5th form a minor triad.

appearing once in the same form, the motive is repeated adding the characteristic falling tone interval (Ex. 10). These same abbreviations of "x" and "z" appear near the end of the movement, at measure 500 (Ex. 11).



To return to the first movement: the first subject,⁷ which enters at measure 7 after the statement of the basic motive, bears only a family resemblance to it (Ex. 12), but the second subject, entering at measure 32, is made up, as far as the principal motive is concerned, of the basic motive in its original form, plus an interlocking inversion of the same motive (Ex. 13). The development

⁷ Gray calls this the second subject!

contains manipulations of the motive too numerous to mention in detail. In section 1 are used the motives of the first and second subjects which are related, as we have pointed out; at measure 66 simultaneous use is made of an inversion of "x" and the initial statement of "z" (Ex. 14). In section 2 constantly interlocking "x"s form an accompaniment of the strings *tremolando* to the interval of an augmented fourth in the winds; and in section 3 the same string accompaniment continues, this time to "z" as shown in Ex. 5, and to interjections of the augmented fourth as in section 2. The recapitulation comes in at measure 88 with the second subject, the first not appearing. This failure to recapitulate the first subject is the only notable formal irregularity in the first movement, except perhaps the choice of tonalities in the exposition. The second subject, which has two sections, A and B, had made use of the key of F# major in the exposition, which had been prepared at the beginning of the movement by the constantly reiterated F# and E, the last two notes of the basic motive. This subject returns now in the normal key of A major, thus ending a movement that had begun in minor in the opposite mode. The B section, related to the first subject, concludes the exposition with a codetta-like extension made up almost altogether of statements of basic motive "x" and finally, in the recapitulation, extends five measures further with three additional statements of "x" rising through three octaves pianissimo (Ex. 15). Motive "y", which we have seen makes its entrance at measure 40, is content with this statement and its recapitulation at measure 96. It lies low, as it were, for the present and takes no part in the thematic working out of the first movement.

Ex. 15

1-m. 110 $mf \rightarrow p <$

Ex. 16

Oboe pp
II-m. 2

Ex. 17

Oboe Vln. Oboe Vln. pp
II-m. 29

The second movement, in F major, is a second rondo, ABACA, with a quite significant coda, duplicated and somewhat extended. The principal theme, A, which the oboe begins as shown in Ex. 16, uses most importantly the harmonic aspect of "x" in the rondo proper, though the first motive employs at measure 7 an inversion of its melodic aspect. The main reliance is upon a sequence of the augmented fourth interval through the mid-section of A (Ex. 17). There is a hint of the fifths of motive "y" at measures 39 and 41, and in the last four measures of the section the cadence formula employs the melodic motive of the beginning of Ex. 16, this time on C in the first violins over a trill on D flat in the seconds—the major 7th of "z". The first subordinate theme, B, is in duple time, dactylic metre, and is made up largely of various forms of motive "x" (Ex. 18). A few measures later the motive



shown in Ex. 19 (measure 65) appears and is followed at measure 81 by a free inversion of it (Ex. 20). These motives pass through the interval of a major 7th, characteristic of "z", followed by the diminished fifth (augmented fourth) characteristic of "x". This gives a preview of the theme of the coda (Exs. 6 and 7), as Gray well observes, though he fails to note whence the 7th comes. While the second form of this motive is in progress (Ex. 20) it is accompanied by a double pedal in the bassoons and timpani on B flat and E natural respectively, thus the augmented fourth; while at the end of the long held B flat the bassoons rise to the E natural. "A", then, reappears in part, *i.e.*, from the mid-section on, and is followed by the second subordinate theme, C, given out by the flutes mainly in thirds, and melodically related to the initial motive of A. This theme consists of a six measure phrase cadencing in E flat, with the same phrase sequenced down one step, cadencing in D flat. These two phrases are separated by an eight-measure phrase in the strings that is borrowed from A—from the figure quoted in Ex. 31-2a. In the transition which follows, the D flat tonality—with relation to the basic key, the Neapolitan of the dominant—drops a fifth to G flat major, the Neapolitan of the tonic. In this key there is a false entrance of A, seven measures long, in very much the

classic fashion, whereupon we have a restatement of A complete in the expected tonality and essentially as at first. A short codetta based on the arpeggiated figure midway in A (Ex. 31-2b) leads to the elaborate coda. This has already been described briefly. It consists, in its first statement, of but 38 measures, but these measures are in the first place taken *Doppio piu lento*, and then the entire section is repeated with an expansion brought about by sequence of four measures (plus an earlier two measure expansion) and with the addition of a sixteen measure extension over the appearance again of the double pedal of an augmented fourth previously mentioned. The coda theme appears finally (from m. 340) and leads into the initial motive of A in the tonality of the mediant, achieving the tonic only in the last two measures, by the melodic means of an inversion of the "x" motive, and finishing with three Fs solo in the timpani (Ex. 21). One cannot take time to mention all the varied appearances of the basic motives as contrapuntal accompaniment. Let us list merely

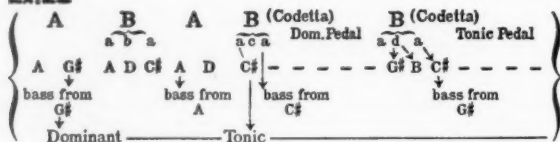
Ex. 21



a figure that appears several times in the basses, cellos and elsewhere, and that consists of the last three notes of "x" backwards; the conspicuous rising augmented fourth in the bassoons and horns, and so on.

We now come to the third movement, already mentioned as the best example I have found of the commentators' "mystery story" technique, and which shall be analysed consequently in somewhat greater detail than the other movements. The form shows a more personal use of the elements of structure than is the case elsewhere in the symphony. It consists fundamentally of variations with two superficially very different forms of the *same* theme used in alternation, giving to the whole a rondo-like appearance. The structure may be diagrammed as shown in Ex. 22. In this example the Bs are all

Ex. 22



minor ternary forms with their small a's all essentially alike and, on the other hand, their "mittelsätze" all different. The third row in the diagram does not necessarily represent tonalities, which are not clearly imprinted until the second B, from which point the key of C# minor asserts itself, but they are rather pivotal tones around which the otherwise tonally ambiguous harmonies cluster. They fall into quite suggestive patterns, however. The a and d are respectively the Neapolitan of the dominant and the Neapolitan of the tonic, setting up, through their resolutions to g# and c# respectively, a broad

dominant-tonic cadence as harmonic basis of the movement. The A and B of our diagram are essentially the same theme, but they alternate rondo-wise until the ever more dominant B, which had at first appeared fragmentarily, gradually has taken form and, finally, after A's two appearances completely tramples it down. At first sight it may seem fantastic to call this B a derivative of basic motive "x", but note: the movement begins with a statement of motive "x", differing from the original form melodically only by having one note added at the beginning, plus the fact that instead of having whole tone progressions exclusively, it is conditioned by the diatonic requirements of a minor scale. This is followed immediately by the motive "z", with the first four notes following the pattern of the corresponding notes in "x" exactly. A third note group duplicates the two preceding minus the last tone—leaving thus the interval of a perfect fifth. After these two introductory measures the A theme gets under way, using exactly the formula established in the introductory group, a rising fifth filled in like 1-2-3-5 of a minor scale, with a similar fifth filled in the same way and rising from a tone a half step higher than the final tone of the preceding group. This motive is concluded with a drop of a second, giving basic motive "x" with the last four notes. (The elements thus far are shown in Ex. 8.) This then obviously derives from the basic motive "x". Now, the initial motive of B merely drops the passing tones and leaps up the bare fifths, making them originate through a series of explicitly stated progressive steps in motive "x" also. This initial motive, Ba, now begins a continuous development carried on throughout its various appearances (Ex. 23.) At first it runs to only three bars total length and

Ex. 23

Ba 1 Horn in E
III-m. 9 *p dolce* *poco cresc.*

Ba 2 Viola Cello
III-m. 22 *p*

Ba 3 *cantabile*
III-m. 39 *p* *espress.* *dim. p*

Ba 4 Cello Vln.
III-m. 51 *mp* *poco f* *pp*

Ba 5 Vln. I Vln. II
III-m. 66 *cresc.* *etc.* *cresc.* *f* *p* Horn



differs in structural detail from the later statements. The second rising fifth has eighth note values instead of quarters and the whole passage takes off from A instead of the eventual C#. When it returns at measure 22 it reaches a length of $5\frac{1}{2}$ measures, and has at the beginning the time intervals of quarter notes for the two rising fifths. These are, however, syncopated. The first of the two stands on a weak beat and lies in the upper octave with reference to the second fifth. After this hesitant start the procedure is much more nearly the eventual one than was that of the first statement. The mid-section of this ternary form is made up principally of motives that may be derived from

- (1) the second subject of the first movement, plus
- (2) the basic motive inverted and reversed, plus
- (3) the same in its original form, and
- (4) finishing with a descending fifth which, with its descending half step introduction, duplicates the initial motive of the passage, though in more emphatic time values (Ex. 24).



Now all the fifths we have seen in this movement up to this point, though derived, as we have seen, remotely from the basic motive, show also a point of possible origin in motive "y" and, through this possibility, a certain relationship between "x" and "y". This motive, "y" which, it will be remembered, was merely stated twice in its original form in the first movement and just hinted at in movement two, now becomes increasingly assertive. The final vigorous descending fifth in bar 16, the third movement, sees the emergence of "y" as a form-giving factor.

On its return the A division appears transposed one half step higher than before, otherwise essentially the same. Tonally this represents the Neapolitan of the dominant, and it should be noted that, though there is a regular recurrence of key centres—a d c# a d c#—, these do not necessarily conform to thematic recurrences.⁸ After a transition of four bars—actually two bars sequenced up a half-step—B enters again. In this very brief space the transition makes use of

- (1) a descending chromatic passage closely related to the mid-section of the second subject of the last movement (m. 170 ff.),

⁸ They are rather comparable to the use of melodic motives incommensurate with rhythmic *talea*, noted in the works of Machault and Schönberg in George Perle's article, "Integrative Devices in the Music of Machault." *Musical Quarterly*, April, 1948.

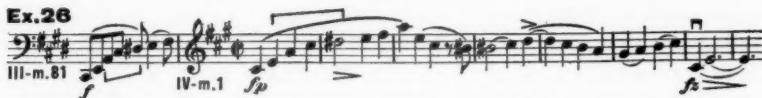
- (2) the reversed form of "x",
- (3) an inversion of B, and
- (4) the descending fifth of "y".

On the re-entry of B the initial motive takes its definitive form and the whole melody extends to eight measures. This is taken by the cellos alone, accompanied by the violins playing inversions of B in diminution. When it returns in measure 51 it is for the first time associated with a significant bass figure—the same essentially that had been used with A on its two appearances—and, in its 5th and 6th measures, with a diminution of the B motive. The mid-section of the ternary form is this time made up of an inversion of the B motive used melodically and with a short continuation that forms, with the second descending fifth in the statement given to the oboe, a motive identical with the fortissimo trumpet motive appearing in the second subject of the first movement at bar 40, which we have labelled "motive y" (Ex. 3). This is followed, and one should say preceded also, by the single descending fifth characteristic of the "y" motive (Ex. 25). At the end of B we have, instead of the expected



recurrence of A, a codetta of some eight bars in which, over a dominant pedal in syncopated sixteenths in the second violins, there appears in the woodwind the basic motive "x" in a number of its transformations. This is followed by a further and final statement of B. The initial melody comes in and, this time in octaves in the strings, surges upward through three octaves and a half, then plunges almost three octaves at one leap, to disappear quickly in the space of two measures. In the mid-section A makes one last attempt to assert itself but, after three bars, Ba enters transposed to G# minor and four bars later briefly appears in B minor, before making its final and climatic appearance. This time it climbs only a distance of two and a half octaves, but in double octaves, and spends four measures in making a gradual descent of one octave, instead of the three-octave leap of the previous appearance. This sixth statement of the Ba melody has the important bass line as well as a full harmonization in the brass and woodwind.

Now follows what is essentially the same codetta that followed the previous B but this time on a tonic pedal. At the beginning of this codetta, at measure 88, a new or partially new motive (it contains prominently the augmented fourth) appears that proves to be the initial motive of the fourth movement (Ex. 26). This is the only example of thematic connection between movements that Mr. Gray can find after the first Symphony!* It is true that in his little



* See p. 167 [ED.].

volume in the "Musical Pilgrim" series of a year or so later Gray hedges a bit, having in the meantime noticed the appearance of the chorale of the finale of the fifth Symphony in the preceding movement. Still he only qualifies, he does not recant; and in view of what we have seen and of what we shall still see, it would seem that we can safely let his statement stand for what it may be worth. This movement confirms partially Gray's claim for a gradually developing thematic structure, though as it is essentially a variation movement it does not suggest such novelty as might otherwise be the case.

The fourth and final movement is in more or less regular sonata-allegro form but shows some interesting departures from regularity, and there are significant treatments of the three basic motives, culminating in a coda where the three reduced to their simplest possible terms are brought into immediate, climatic association with each other. The movement is introduced with the figure mentioned as appearing near the end of the last movement. The first subject group is remarkably extended, embracing, with the transition, 143 measures. It is also remarkably varied, and particularly remarkable in the arrangement of that variety, for we see seven sections associated in the manner of the several themes in a third rondo—ABACABA. Tonally these various sections remain in the key of A, however. The "a" section, furthermore, has three thematic subdivisions: the first, just mentioned; the second, introducing the motive given in Ex. 2, the combination of the augmented fourth of "x" with the resolving fifth of "y"; and the third, a five-measure melody made up exclusively of various compressions, inversions and so on of the "x" motive (Ex. 27). The first of these, that Gray dismisses as having no thematic part



in the building up of the movement, does bear the germ of the movement's most characteristic motive, that of Ex. 2, as will be seen by a glance at Ex. 28.



The "b" consists for the most part of a melody in eighth notes given to the cellos, that leads into the second division of "a" abbreviated. The "c" section that follows is a strange, muttering passage for the string choir in repeated eighths pianissimo. The motion is purely diatonic and the A major tonality is undiluted. After 22 measures of this, the material quoted in Ex. 9 appears over a continuation of the same string passage. It will be noticed that this new motive—or motives, for we have already seen it to be made up of simplified forms of "x" and "z"—stands in the key of E flat, whose tonic is removed an augmented fourth from the tonic of the continuing passage in A. This E flat—A combination of tonalities will be met with later in the course

of the movement. The "a" section now returns minus its first division, but expanded somewhat and with the material shown in Ex. 27, which was omitted from the second appearance of "a", now appearing twice: "b" follows slightly abbreviated. The final section of this remarkable first subject is an "a" dissolving as transition. The E flat and A tonalities are constantly interchanging through this transition, which leads at measure 144 into the second subject, a chorale-like structure, moving in almost constant half-note time values. The tonality constantly shifts until an entirely unequivocal close in C major comes in, emphasized by being sustained for 19 measures.⁹ This subject is accompanied almost throughout by the interval of a falling fifth derived from motive "y". At measure 170 and following appears the chromatic motive that had been suggested in the transition following the second A of the third movement. (The most important thematic ideas of this second subject are shown in Ex. 29.)

Ex. 29

1. Horn in E
Cello
IV-m. 159

2. Vln.
Cello
IV-m. 170

3. IV-m. 187
Vla.
(5th Bass)
etc.

Ex. 30

IV-m. 258

The relatively brief development begins at measure 237 and deals almost exclusively with the material of the second subject. It has three sections of which the first is brief and transitional in nature. The second section sets up first a figure of falling and rising fifths, derived from "y", which are the constant accompaniment of the section. The chromatic figure from the second subject is treated in a peculiar manner. Its six tones are divided into three pairs and sequenced up a step at a time (Ex. 30). A second part, that had originally accompanied this motive in parallel motion, now takes its first note a third lower than formerly, giving contrary motion to the first two notes and making an "x" motive of this accompanying voice. The third section is based entirely on the last division of the second subject—more than

⁹ Professor Abraham describes these 19 measures as the development.

that, it is essentially the same—even in key! This may cause some uncertainty. Professor Abraham has called this whole division recapitulation, from the point where we conceive the development to start, claiming thus that the second subject precedes the first in the recapitulation. But in our thought these first two sections, measures 237 to 280, are unmistakably developmental in nature. The third, however, does not develop. Its likeness of key to the exposition might argue against its being a part of the development section but it also argues against recapitulation. There is a later appearance of the second subject, abbreviated to be sure, but coming just about where it would have been expected (measure 441), and in the expected tonality. Consequently we consider the material beginning at measure 281 as part of the development section, though admittedly somewhat ambiguous, and accept the near quotation and the key merely as irregularities. Furthermore, this section serves excellently as retransition to the recapitulation which enters almost imperceptibly, coming in at a point corresponding to measure 20 in the exposition. This proceeds regularly, though slightly abbreviated, until the first return of the "a", where a transposition to the key of E flat occurs which is retained through two sections of the recapitulated first subject, "a" and "c". It will be seen that this key bears the relationship of the augmented fourth to the main key of A major, and in the latter part of section "c", the abbreviated "x" makes its appearance in A against a background of E flat—just the opposite treatment to that in the exposition (Ex. 10). At the end of the "c" section, "a" returns in the normal key of A, but in a developed form instead of the former one, making extensive use of the characteristic motive of the movement. This development extends through 56 measures and is divided into two sections of exactly equal length—the first, as was just noted, dealing with material from the first subject, and the second most importantly with the second quotation from the second subject (Ex. 29-2), but continuing to exploit the same characteristic motive. Both sections thus give conspicuous and continual expression to this motive, the resolving augmented fourth. This development replaces the final ABA of the first subject in the exposition. The second subject, which follows, is now based on the key of A minor and is represented, not as in the exposition, but by the second, chromatic portion only, treated both as in the exposition, and as in the development, *i.e.*, as a two-note figure sequenced. It is interrupted continually by interjections of the simplest forms of "z" and "x", and it is, of course, accompanied, as it was in the exposition, by the falling fifth of "y". Moreover, the association in simultaneous statement of the two note, rising third form of "x", the two note falling second of the second subject b, and the two note falling fifth of "y" demonstrate the intimate relationship of those three motives.

The brief coda occupies the last 44 measures and consists of three sections. The first is a final statement of the plangent "b" section of the second subject, and the second, a strange passage *tremolando* and *sempre pianissimo* for the strings. An ascending melodic minor scale on A is played by the cellos and basses, rising in all a tenth, while the upper strings sustain a simple A, except that at the fifth measure the viola drops to D# (the augmented fourth) and

then resolves to E. Now there has been a bass of three diatonic notes (1, 2, and 3 of the scale) that has appeared at strategic points in the movement—near the beginning, at the entrance of the development, at the start of the recapitulation, and now as the movement draws to a close. For these three notes appear twice—once at each end of the rising scale of a tenth—and these two statements are separated by the four notes that form the augmented fourth. Now comes the final simplification, the symphony reduced again to its germ. This final section has the rising third of "x", the falling major seventh of "z", the falling fifth of "y", and the chromatically dropping chords of the sixth of the second subject "b" (Ex. 11). That is all, except the simple cadence in the rhythm of that "b" and the inexpressibly sad duplication of that rhythm on the single note A—the simplification is absolute.

It has not been the purpose of the present paper to discuss the aesthetic significance of the fourth Symphony at length but to demonstrate the tight structure, the thematic economy here illustrated in marvellous fashion. Thus we find it to be made up thematically almost entirely of material derived through one sort of manipulation or another from the basic motive "x" or its accessory motives "y" and "z" through a most extraordinary technique of variation. It is true that there are no themes, thought of as aggregations of motives, quoted as wholes. It might be thought then that Gray perhaps had in mind these total themes when he denies their quotation. But he gives away his case completely when he makes the "partial exception" that can be found in the fourth Symphony—for this "exception" is one motive only, extending for one measure. Each movement may be "sharply differentiated from all the others", as he says, but it is certainly not because of the complete difference in thematic make-up between them. This might have been demonstrated as effectively by an analysis of the sixth Symphony, which has a basic motive on which all movements are founded thematically and which is presented contrapuntally for some 30 measures before the first movement proper sets in. There are quotations from both first and second movements in the finale of the third Symphony, and numerous similar examples might be brought forward to refute Gray's thesis. There are somewhat similar thematic likenesses between different symphonies, such as a motive (Ex. 31) used conspicuously in the finale of the Third, in the second movement of the Fourth and as the

Ex. 31
Third Symphony—Finale (meas. 306-7)



Fourth Symphony—2nd Movement

2. 11-m.13 *mp* 11-m.239 *dolce*

Fifth Symphony—1st Movement

3. 1-m.1 *p* 1-m.163

initial motive, first measure, of the fifth Symphony. This is no doubt accidental, but to say that such likenesses do not occur is to make a singularly questionable statement.

The irregularities of form with Sibelius always have perfectly rational explanations of one sort or another. For example, the finale of the third Symphony is a modified sonata-allegro form to which is fused a coda which is not merely a coda to this finale, but a sort of peroration to the entire symphony. Now the addition of such a factor poses problems that an ordinary coda to a movement, whose major function is cadence confirmation, does not raise. A normally closing recapitulation would be too conclusive for such a peroration to succeed. So the composer reverses the normal order of the development and recapitulation, thus leaving loose ends to connect with the peroration. A motive consisting of a descending third, characteristically used, had appeared in the retransition to the recapitulation and had been introduced later in the transition to the second subject, developed into a brief chorale-like passage. This chorale now becomes the mighty 130 measure hymn with which the Symphony closes.

The fifth Symphony presents a similar technique. In this work the first two *movements* are welded together in like fashion. This Symphony is often spoken of as having three movements only, but the fact that Sibelius himself meant the ostensible first movement to be understood actually as two fused together is proved by a letter, dated 20th May, 1918, in which he speaks specifically of each of *four* movements. The first movement, in modified sonata-form, has the same treatment as the finale of the Third. Development and recapitulation are reversed, the loose ends being interwoven with the beginning of the scherzo movement—thus with a complete movement instead of a final peroration.

The seventh Symphony shows a comparable fusion of the elements of four movements—first, a sonata-form minus the recapitulation, the development leading directly into a scherzo, a transition to a brief *adagio*, another transition to the sonatina structure that forms the real finale, plus an extensive coda *adagio*.

Thus, while many externally strange looking forms appear, they prove to be modifications of traditional and familiar procedures. This rooting in tradition the author takes to be a virtue. We progress by perpetual modification of the familiar. Only the formula ABA has universal validity. When one deals with sheer sound unsupported by any other form-giving agency, it is necessary to employ those means that alone can give in those circumstances self-contained, rounded form—isolation of some pattern at an explicit point in space, a wandering from this point of reference and, in one way or another, a return. This, however, can be achieved in an infinite number of ways. The real composer is not hampered; only the unimaginative must strive for self-conscious originality. Sibelius does not—great composers never do—and in that fact lies the reason for the solidity of his forms—they have roots in the ground. And in that lies much of his great significance as a composer.

Faust and Henry Hugo Pierson

BY

H. G. SEAR

HAS any music for the second part of *Faust* got into currency? Not even Schumann's *Scenes from Faust* provides the answer. Goethe's dramatic scheme was too vast, too complex, for symphonic purpose; and now, besides, the vogue for programme music has passed. And the almost insuperable difficulty of staging *Part Two* has inhibited the supply of incidental music; or production has been so cut, so garbled, and understanding so tardy, indeed, that what music exists can hardly be said to be truly incidental to Goethe's masterpiece.

Here, with one possible exception (though, in fact, Radziwill's *Music to Faust* is mostly concerned with *Part One*) an Englishman was first in the field; but, as I shall show, he laboured under a cloud of prejudiced folly; and he fled from his native country to Germany where his genius quite firmly established itself. Only rancorous memories of him remained in England.

It is extremely unlikely that even a Goethe centenary will bring about much more than a reminder of Henry Hugo Pierson's *Music to the Second Part of Faust*. Composed in 1854 for a stage production at the Stadttheater, Hamburg, it won for him the Gold Medal for Art and Science awarded by Leopold I of Belgium; and in several leading towns where Goethe's birthday was celebrated, there the music was heard again and again.

Performance *in toto* is, no doubt, unthinkable, especially as the music was never intended for detached presentation; and I judge the Hamburg stage production to have been full of compromises. Pierson's is not bad music; it has genius even if its flight is not invariably sustained. The fact that he was the first English musician of his day (a poor day) to withstand the besetting influence of Mendelssohnian complacency; the fact that an Englishman should then compose music to *Faust* at all, at a time when the great poem was but little comprehended even by the best critical minds*; even the fact that four or five plays of Shakespeare are represented among Pierson's major orchestral works; all these are reasons or excuses for the resuscitation of his memory.

The names already cited sufficiently indicate that he was a Romantic. His first published work, highly praised by Schumann, was a setting of six poems by Byron; and when he had settled in Germany his first important work was on a Romantic subject, to German words, and published under the signature of Edgar Mannsfeldt. It must be explained that his father, a church

* William Frederic Hauhart (*Reception of Faust in England, 1909*) turns from the English reviews of *Part Two* "with disappointment. The misinterpretation of the second part in England is a long story". Even Lewes he found blind to its meaning and its merits (1855) and the stricture applies to further serious criticisms in 1888 (Sime) and 1893 (Seely). Lewes deemed *Part Two* a failure and an elaborate mistake. Coleridge, who knew only the first part, said that the scenes were "mere magic lantern pictures".

dignitary, did not wish the family name to become attached to certain operatic projects; so Pierson (and even that name was an adaptation of the very English Pearson) adopted a family name of his wife's relations.

For want of any indication to the contrary I imagine that the English translation in the published score of the *Faust* music is Pierson's own. Certainly it does not tally with those current in this country now. It is necessary to add, too, that it is not a full score. The music is reduced for piano solo, piano duet; the former, for instance in the overture, the latter for the briefest of melodramas, sometimes; occasionally a violin part is written in but generally there is no indication of orchestral detail. But in the Shakespearean pieces at least, Pierson handled the orchestra pretty well for his provenance and period.

His overture is spacious and rich in incident. It draws upon the detail of the dramatic music, builds up to an imposing climax, suggests a measured sense of sonority and a rhythmic freedom not often found in contemporary English composers.

In the opening scene of *Part Two* a pleasant landscape is discovered, with Faust bedded in flowery turf, weary, restless, seeking sleep. It is twilight. A circle of spirits, hovering, flit around, graceful tiny forms. Pierson's music here is sufficiently graceful and entirely unobtrusive. The introduction is for harp and clarinet and later for full orchestra. Ariel, a soprano, has an aria accompanied by (Aeolian) harps. A chorus, now in two and now in four parts, repeats the final phrase of Ariel's lines in the opening stanza.

Ariel calls on the gentle spirits to assuage the strife that rends Faust's heart, and in a new chorus the elves promise to bring him sweet oblivion. They and the soloist alternate in an abridged version of the lovely invocatory stanzas, Ariel finally bidding the sleeper to gird his loins for greater endeavour. The scene itself, and the music, have the task of indicating that now the earthy Faust of *Part One* is translated to a higher sphere where the adventures of the spirit shall be more searching than those of the physical man.

Apparently Pierson was denied the opportunity provided by the tremendous tumult with which Goethe announces the uprising of the sun. Faust, no doubt, soliloquizes, and the scene changes to the Emperor's palace. A blaze of trumpets accompanies the entry of the courtiers of "every grade, splendidly attired". Once the Emperor has settled on the throne, the pages inform him of a matter of which he is loftily oblivious: in ascending the stair, his fool, the "mass of fat" had caught his foot in the imperial mantle and has been borne away dead, or drunken. But another is at hand, his gear costly but grotesque. It is Mephistopheles.

Pierson was not tempted to fool music for this episode; or, as is probable, Dr. Wollheim the producer (if they had "producers" at the Hamburg Stadttheater in 1854) would not brook a musical intervention. The plentiful stage business goes on bereft of music and Mephistopheles, installed as court jester, asks his riddles, mocks Emperor, court and populace alike. Then, to a rumble of contrabass *tremolo* melodrama, he speaks of the Mothers who dwell enthroned in awful solitude beneath the surface of the earth.

Again the scene shifts, to the dimly lit Baronial Hall; Emperor and court have entered. Four bars of music for trombones precede the Astrologer's intimation that

All is prepared for our majestic show;
At sovran bidding let the play commence!
Open, ye walls! Ye shadows act your part!

and then to six bars of *maestoso assai*, Faust rises from beneath. This bit of pantomime not only allows the Astrologer to make the most of an occasion in which a cloud of incense blends with the surrounding air, but affords Pierson an opportunity for an Intermezzo; for, as the Astrologer says, "Tones of unearthly music breathe around, and even the temple seems to sing". The music, with solemn horn calls heard from back stage, continues as Faust calls up the apparition of Helena in *tremolos*, and only becomes more urgent when Faust, forgetting that Helena is an immortal, tries to seize her, when, with a shock of thunder (left to the stage hands) the whole magic vision vanishes and Mephistopheles, taking the prostrate Faust upon his shoulder, declares sardonically

You have it now! With fools oneself to burden
May the devil prove a sorry guerdon,

and, like the scene, dissolves into darkness; what time a falling bass motive brings the curtain down on act I.

Its successor has its own introduction, bearing a close relationship to the overture. The scene, when the curtain rises, is Wagner's laboratory, cluttered with cumbrous apparatus, the fearful clang of a bell thrilling through its sooty walls. Within the philosopher's "inmost phial" a secret radiance throws out a pure white lustre. For Wagner, imbued with the belief that chemistry can generate human life by crystallisation, is absorbed in the means thereto. When Mephistopheles enters, claiming a welcome, he is accepted without question. Wagner merely salutes the star that rules the hour. The devil, of course, is there for his own ends; the human substance forms, it mounts, it glows! The phial resounds; the mannikin exists. Homunculus is born! Walton or Vaughan Williams would limn the scene in half a dozen fuliginous bars, throwing in a horrid phrase or so as Wagner exults.

Pierson's introduction may well have frayed mid-century nerves in preparation. He goes on to provide music behind the scenes and a three-part chorus of invisible spirits, apostrophising Earth, Air, Fire and Water. It suits the absorbed action well, and then, as Wagner gazes in ecstasy upon the embryo figure of Homunculus, his phial gives forth a "thin melody"; no more than six bars.

As final number to the second act, Pierson was called upon to invent music for the flight of Mephistopheles with Faust, whom he has brought to life, and Homunculus, beneath his mantle. He rises into the air smoothly and easily and, to my mind, with a singular indifference to the portentous but perhaps, for practical stage purposes, difficult happenings in Goethe's scheme, those of the *Classical Walpurgis Night*.

But these are an almost impossible problem for any stage producer; and we may conclude that they were cut in the presentation with which Pierson was concerned. Nevertheless it is a scene that offers wonderful possibilities to a composer. Yet the fact remains that in his *Scenes from Faust* Schumann carefully avoids the *Classical Walpurgis Night* which, it is hardly necessary to remind the reader, must not be confused with that which occurs in the first part of *Faust*, set by Mendelssohn.

As far as music is concerned a clean break has been made, during which the whole of the *Classical Walpurgis Night* may or may not have been enacted.

The scene is now laid before the Palace of Menelaus at Sparta whither Helena and a chorus of captive Trojan women have been conjured. Pierson's introduction, like that to act II is related to the overture and serves the practical purpose of dramatic preparation. The music is flowing and graceful, not without hints to the chequered nature of the act as a whole. B flat changes to the more open D major as the "much admired and much reviled" Helena enters. Acting under compulsion by Mephistopheles, she expects to find the palace prepared for her reception; yet, since she knows not what awaits her, she has to summon up her courage, to a brief melodrama:—

The hidden future canst thou not avail;
Advance, O Queen, intrepidly!
For good or evil course unharbingered
To all, man and no prophet finds belief.
Whate'er betide, it doth become me well
To enter fearlessly the royal mansion.

Whereupon, the Trojan women, little suspecting that they will have to face Mephistopheles in the disguise of Phorkyas, "foul beldame", blithely sing praise of the Olympians.

Again Helena speaks, to a brief B minor melodrama.

The grisly birth of Night will Beauty's votary
Phoebus to caverns banish, or their malice quell,

she says, when suddenly Phorkyas steps forth upon the threshold and confronts her. Is this the appointed guardian of the palace?

Pierson avoids the quickfire of taunts and abuse that flies between chorus and Phorkyas. What music could do its malignity justice? As Helena speaks her willingness to follow the hateful steward, mists envelop the scene where once beauty had reigned; there the "undelectable, grey-glimmering, over-crowded, ever-empty Hades" yawns. The chorus here is as effective as it is simple and its accompaniment weirdly suggestive.

Then in an instant the mist dissolves. But sunlight there is none, only the lowering walls of a fantastic mediaeval castle. Nevertheless the volatile Trojan women discern menials in the gateways and the windows, preparing for an honoured guest. Then to the gallant but mannered strains of a processional march heard at first at a distance, a gorgeous entourage enters with Faust in

knightly costume. A middle section takes the form of a four-part chorus:

Move stately on, chivalrous train

 Worthy, O worthy, threefold worthy!
 Such a welcome be signally blest!

Meantime, as the audience is kept fully aware, great things are happening beyond the confines of the castle: Menelaus' marauders are raging; there are alarums and excursions, trumpet blasts and thunderous explosions. Pierson supplies none of these. Faust gives orders to his captains. But his last words follow thus:

Now be thrones changed to an arbour,
 And be our bliss Arcadian free!

The orchestra plays a charming pastorage (intermezzo), delicate in substance and delightfully imaginative. The transformation is effected and Phorkyas speaks of the child Euphorion, born of Helena and Faust in Arcadia. As we gaze upon the blissful pastoral scene a harp is heard. Then a principal soprano, alternating with the chorus, dancing and singing, has an effective solo.

Next comes a more extended melodrama. The youth Euphorion is the type of poetic genius and Goethe makes him climb the craggy heights and essay to leap to the very heavens. It is a superb scene in the drama, one of the finest flights of Goethe's genius. Pierson provides a melodrama which begins as Euphorion cries:

Natheless! and wings unfold,
 Plane upon plane
 Thither! I must, e'en thus!
 Say me not so!

and casts himself into the air, his head irradiated, a luminous trail gliding after him! But

Icarus! Icarus!
 Wailing and woe!

cry the chorus. And on the stage a beautiful youth falls headlong at the parents' feet. It is part of the stage business to imply that though we think we know him, yet his soul rises like a comet to heaven, leaving empty robe, mantle and lyre lying on the ground. And as Faust and Helena breathe their bitter complaints we hear Euphorion's final words, "Mother, leave me not alone". Pierson then adds an impassioned chorus, "Sound, immortal harp".

To act IV there is a short introduction and the curtain rises on a mighty, craggy peak. A cloud drifts up, parts, and Faust steps forth. It is a finely descriptive prelude to Faust's most magnificent lines. The scene moves forward to the point where Faust calls upon himself to achieve the exquisite emotion of thrusting back the sea from the shore and demands that Mephistopheles second him: "That is my wish, but do thou dare to second". And then a distant martial drum is heard and the voice of trumpets. It is the

battle march of the Imperial Army. Pierson devises an *ad libitum* passage which may be used intermittently up to the words, those of Mephistopheles,

. . . who knoweth
The hazard of the dice, what time he throweth?
And hath he luck, will vassals round him rally?

Then the march is heard in its full glory and battle music ensues; but the stage is left entirely to Goethe's spell until the Emperor speaks:

The victor in his pride lauds the propitious God.
Straightway a million throats—it needeth no injunction,
"Thee God we magnify!" chant forth with solemn unction,

when Pierson launches a pompous *Te Deum*, not in full, of course, since this would protract the greatest of dramas unduly; it goes no further than "All the earth doth worship thee!"

There is no more music until we are in the open country of act V to which we are introduced, curiously, by an *Andante pietoso* for organ, the preceding act having ended with the absolution of the victorious Emperor.

For the scene in Deep Night, Lynceus the warden sings, from the watch tower of Faust's castle, "My home is the turret, its guardian these eyes". This song is conceived along simple lines, with a subtle motive which quickens its life in the very manner of Schubert. For the entry of the four Grey Hags, Care, Penury, Guilt and Distress, a harrowing melodrama is devised. Care having departed, the remaining three, accompanied by a melodrama even more poignant, speak these lines:

The cloud-rack is scudding and quench'd each star now!
Behind there, behind there! From far now, from far now,
There cometh our brother, there cometh he—Death,

followed by Faust's despairing speech with music to the last three lines:

With happenings, with warnings and with signs,
Thus are we overawed, we stand alone,
The door doth creak, and yet doth enter none!

Then, again to a melodrama in which a solo violin has the burden, Care breathes on Faust and blinds him. Yet, still preserving faith in his unconquerable mind Faust says:

To speed the greatest enterprises
One mind for thousand hands suffices,

and totters out.

Next comes a lugubrious solo-quartet in C minor with obbligati for violin and cello; the song of the Lemures as they dig Faust's grave, an eerie little number almost, but not quite, running into Faust's dying lines, "To such a moment past me fleeing, tarry, I'd cry"; melodrama, still, this, *Andante mesto*

and followed by an *agitato* during which Mephistopheles calls up devils from the yawning pit to help him secure the soul of Faust.

But there is a burst of light from above and a chorus of Beatified Spirits pours in as roses are strewn on the rude tomb and the demons give way before the heavenly host. A second chorus follows at once and this time the angels lavish tenderness upon the dead and as they bear away Faust's soul they continue singing; and even Mephistopheles is overcome.

As the scene changes to the mountain side, thunder (made by Pierson) rolls, and runs straight into a grandiose chorus of Sainted Anchorites and finally a double chorus for the Younger Seraphs and Angels ascending with the immortal part of Faust; a quite magnificent affair.

At the last, Pierson attempts to draw a landscape of surpassing beauty for the scene in the Empyrean, through which float angels, spirits and visions of the Mater Gloriosa. And, as finale, the Mystical Chorus in which the ineffable is wrought with love. Altogether it is far from unworthy music, a scheme ambitious enough, an achievement magnificent enough, to have its place alongside the *Midsummer Night's Dream* music or that to *Egmont* in the historical succession.

In 1857, nine excerpts from Pierson's *Faust* were performed at the Norwich Triennial Festival. The critic of a local paper, bitterly opposed to anything from Pierson's pen, could not deny himself the pleasure of remarking "In the course of an hour and a half, many had taken refuge in the balmy oblivion of sleep". In 1869, the *Times* critic mentioned "a queer sequence of noises called a chorus": he was referring to "Sound, immortal harp" from the same unfortunate work.

Perhaps the audience was not altogether to blame for its somnolent attitude on that occasion. It may be hazarded that they were much more closely acquainted with Pierson than with *Faust*, not to mention Goethe. Spohr's opera on the Faust legend had reached London in 1840 in the original German. Yet even in Spohr's case, and he was a favourite here, it achieved no great popularity. Gounod's *Faust*, which did, was not yet written. So we have the case of a predominantly provincial audience faced with several items of incidental music to a drama of which they hardly suspected the existence.

Eminent critics, however, did not sleep. On the contrary, Chorley of the *Athenaeum* and Davison of *The Times*, neither of whom were *born* fools, howled like prairie dogs.

But the truth is that the whole scene was ensanguined by a local feud that, in 1852, had neared the dimensions of the Gluck-Piccinni war. Norwich was split in two. Pierson's oratorio, *Jerusalem*, found itself in juxtaposition with another, *Israel Restored*, by Dr. W. R. Bexfield, a native and a chorister of Norwich. A friend of Pierson's had had the temerity to publish an analytical guide to *Jerusalem*, one passage of which added fuel to the fire; explaining Pierson's "system", the author quoted from Robertson's *Influence of Poetry* the passage

"Let old forms and time-honoured words perish with due honour, and give us fresh symbols and new forms of speech to express not what our fathers felt, but what *we* feel".

Not only did this incense Bexfield's supporters who feared that if Pierson's stock went up, their man's must come down, but it was meat and drink to Chorley and Davison. "System?" They sniffed and snorted. "Ah! Wagner! And Berlioz! And Felicien David[!]" they muttered. Schumann and whom not? And "sans melody, sans rhythm, sans harmony, sans form" they cried in accents not unknown.

In the *Athenaeum*, having recently coupled Schumann with Wagner as joint target for his stupid vituperation, Chorley now granted to Pierson "some good beginnings" spoiled by the author's

"fantastic and unauthorized method of construction . . . what is crude, puerile, and uncouth is intermixed with the best thoughts. . . . The voices are abused by being called upon to sing the most desperate intervals and phrases at variance with all received ideas of musical cadence, accent or rhythm".

And in *The Times*, Davison wrote,

"He belongs to the word-painting school, or the 'aesthetic' as the admirers of Richard Wagner, Robert Schumann, etc., put it. We must regret, however, to find a man who evidently thinks seriously, and writes *con amore*, giving himself a false idol, which, if worshipped universally, music would soon cease to be an art".

And what is worse, Chorley, at least, could not refrain from coupling Pierson, a sensitive and retiring man, with the local faction, or from suggesting that he was deeply engaged in intrigue. Thus it came about that whenever Pierson's name was seen in a programme, blood rushed to these critics' eyes and blinded them to the composer's merits. The *Times* obituary of Pierson grudgingly and ineffectively tried to straighten matters out, but the assassination was a *fait accompli*, even in 1852.

So perished the work of a Reid Professor of Music, a teacher of Parry, the first English translator of Schumann's *Advice to Young Musicians* and a treatise on Beethoven's method of composition.

Book Review

TWO REISSUES

A Short History of Music. By Alfred Einstein. Pp. viii + 397. (Cassell.) 1948. 14s.
MUSIC: A Short History. By W. J. Turner. Pp. 105. (Black.) 1949. 6s.

The first is the fifth edition of an invaluable work first translated into English by fifteen competent hands, which should be on the shelves of every serious music-lover. It is a personal document and there has been no attempt in the later issue to extend the bare mention of Dvořák as "the most inventive and spontaneously musical of all national composers" or to introduce the name of Berg. The plum of the book is the 39 musical examples, which are not just elucidatory fragments such as are appended to "symposium" books, but constitute a real anthology to be played and replayed.

The second, also, is a personal document, first printed in 1932 and now enlarged by a chapter on music in the twentieth century, clearly the work of an alert rather than a profound mind, but of a poet's mind. The point in the last chapter that there is no such thing as "sacred music" and that to the true musician and true music-lover all music is sacred, but of varying quality and significance is serviceable. Seven portraits replace the drawings in the original edition.

E. H. W. M.

Leonard Bernstein

BY

PETER GRADENWITZ

WRITING in 1940 about the music of American composers, Basil Maine argued that "for many years British musicians have been expecting to hear of an American creative artist comparable to the numerous interpreting artists who are to be heard both individually and in orchestras in that country. But no such artist has arrived".¹ A year before, the second edition of a comprehensive survey of American music, published in New York,² listed several hundred composers active in the United States of America, many of them having a long catalogue of works to their credit; but the British or Continental reader was hardly familiar with so much as a dozen of the names. In 1949 the situation does not seem to be much different. European publishers and libraries are making available orchestral and chamber music in printed scores, and broadcasting stations present some of them occasionally; yet American music is not so well-known, so widely-discussed, so stimulating a factor in contemporary European musical life as was, say, the music of the Central European schools (the Viennese, the Hungarian, the French, the Czech, etc.) in the entire pre-war world. There can be no doubt, though, that America—still a "New World" as far as civilization and cultural and artistic life are concerned—can offer much to the various European schools; how great are the attractions offered by the still largely unexplored treasures of American folklore and by the rhythm of life in that country may be measured from their influence on all composers who have made their home there: they are little less evident in the new works of the Europeans in America (from the late Béla Bartók's last compositions to the music of Schönberg, and from Křenek to Hindemith) than in the creations of the various American schools proper. The young American composer, on the other hand, approaches his task with a freshness of spirit that is lacking in much of contemporary European music; he is also often superficial, it is true—boisterous as only youth can be, heedless of traditional values and laws, and confident that his is the right, in fact the only way.

The few composers known to European audiences and radio listeners—Aaron Copland, Roy Harris, Walter Piston, Roger Sessions and the like—today represent the middle generation in American music. Most of these composers were trained by European masters; it is only the generation of their disciples that is fully American-grown and detached from the immediate and direct influence of European cultural and musical life. It is the younger generation—born after 1910—that allows us best to analyse the ways and

¹ *New Paths in Music*. Nelson, London, 1940, p. 60.

² John Tasker Howard: *Our American Music*, Crowell, New York. Second Edition 1939. In 1946 a greatly enlarged edition of this book was published, listing scores of new names and recent compositions.

trends in contemporary American music and to appreciate the problems as well as the achievements of the creative musicians in the New World. William Schuman, David Diamond, Samuel Barber, Leonard Bernstein and Lukas Foss are among the names most frequently found on American concert and radio programmes, and their work must be regarded as typical of the present development of composition in the United States. While these men studied, the elder generation produced their first large-scale compositions of importance; the symphonic works of the middle-generation masters can be regarded as first landmarks of independent modern American music (outside America, only their earlier—often slight—compositions have been performed, especially in the case of Copland). And while none of the younger men seems to have produced an outstanding masterwork yet, there is sufficient interest in their compositions to warrant a thorough study of the trends and developments leading to them and in turn radiating from them.

In a way Leonard Bernstein is the most typical among the younger American composers, though he has written very few works only and divides his time between conducting, piano-playing, writing and lecturing, and actually composing music. The versatility shown by Bernstein the musician also characterises Bernstein the composer, for of his compositions no one is like the second and each tries to tackle a new field from a new angle of approach.

Leonard Bernstein came first into the limelight when he was called to replace Bruno Walter, who had fallen ill, in a New York Philharmonic concert and scored a tremendous success in a difficult programme. He had graduated from Harvard University in 1939 at the age of 21, studied at the Curtis Institute in Philadelphia and at Serge Koussevitzky's Berkshire Music Centre later, and become assistant conductor of the New York Philharmonic after having been fired by a ballet master as "he could not keep rhythm" (this meaning that he accompanied the steps of young dancers with Shostakovich, Prokofiev, Copland, and Bernstein instead of Delibes and Tchaikovsky). Shortly after his success as a conductor he was given an opportunity of presenting his *Jeremiah* Symphony: the work earned the New York Music Critics' Award as the best symphonic work by an American composer performed during the 1944/45 season. A ballet score, *Fancy Free* (known to London ballet fans from the American Ballet Theatre's production of the work), was followed by another ballet, *Facsimile*; Bernstein now dreams of the completion of an American opera, which seems to be ready in outline, and has written a piano Concerto based on W. H. Auden's latest poem, *The Age of Anxiety*. He has become one of the most sought conductors in American musical life and has twice toured Europe as musical ambassador of his country: his second trip included most of the European countries and Palestine. He is writing a book now and has been asked—but declined—to play the lead in a Hollywood musical; his conducting feats include the conducting from the piano of Ravel's intricate Concerto and directing by heart the scores of Bach, Mozart, Mahler and Stravinsky.

Much of his success as a composer has been ascribed to the unusual charm of Bernstein's own personality and the impressiveness of his versatile talent—

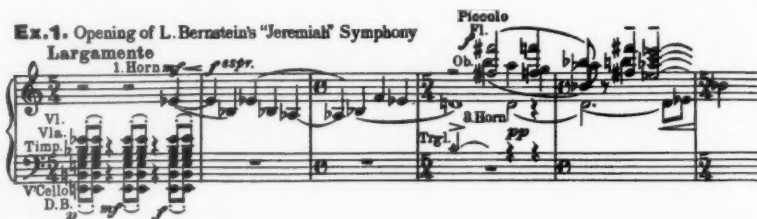
both of them mirrored in his own music. But have his works intrinsic merits when detached from the personality; is his output an important contribution to contemporary music in general and to American musical creation in particular, or is it just an example of short-lived artistry "to mirror the heart-beat of America"? The list of his works is small, even for a musician of 30: it comprises a Sonata for clarinet and piano (1941/42); *Seven Anniversaries* for piano (1942/43); a cycle of *Five Kid Songs*, "I Hate Music" (1943); the *Jeremiah* Symphony (completed 1942); *Fancy Free*, a thirty-minute ballet for symphonic ensemble (1943); music for the Broadway show *On the Town* (1945); the *Facsimile* ballet (1946) and *The Age of Anxiety* (1948/49). But looking into the merits of these works one can have little doubt that Bernstein is not only the typical American composer of our day, and the typical musician, maybe, of our age, but that his is a genuine and great talent, the development of which is unfortunately hampered by the composer's preoccupation with conducting. The many-sidedness of his talents reminds us, just as does his personal charm, of another composer of Jewish extraction, Mendelssohn, who said (in his letter to Ferdinand Hiller of December 10th, 1837) something I have heard Bernstein express in very similar words:

"... Two months of constant conducting takes more out of me than two years of composing all day long . . . At the end of the greatest turmoil if I ask myself what I have actually been doing, after all it is hardly worth speaking of . . . I often think I should like to retire completely, never conduct any more, and only write; but then again there is a certain charm in an organized musical system, and in having the direction of it . . ."

The similarity in temperament and gifts between these two men is far-reaching; it begins with their outer appearance ("You had only to be in his presence for a few moments to feel how completely his appearance and manner represented the genius he possessed . . . He had a lithe figure, was very active and had a great deal of what may be termed sinuous movement in his action, which was inimitably in harmony with the feeling of the moment"—this description, fitting both men, is quoted from J. C. Horsley's letter about Mendelssohn to Sir George Grove, published for the first time by Mr. Jack Werner in *Music and Letters*, Vol. XXVIII, p. 316), it is apparent in their ideas on music ("Ever since I began to compose, I have remained true to my starting principle: not to write a page because no matter what public, or what pretty girl wanted it to be thus or thus; but to write solely as I myself thought best, and as it gives me pleasure"; "People talk much about music, but really say so little. I fully believe that words are insufficient to express thoughts; and if they were sufficient, I think I should leave off composing music"; "No national music for me! Ten thousand devils take all nationality!"—these extracts from Mendelssohn's letters, quoted in Mr. Werner's article, fully describe Leonard Bernstein's feelings), and it is striking in both composers' genius in adapting other masters' styles to their own requirements. I even venture to go further and say that the young American is essentially as romantic a composer as was Mendelssohn a century ago; and the early development is, of course, an additional point of interest. We cannot fail to note the interest of both men in

religious tradition, that of Mendelssohn in Christian thought and religious music, as his family had adopted the Christian faith, and that of Bernstein in the world of Hebrew thought and wisdom into which he was introduced thoroughly in his youth.

The contemporary composer absorbed the language and style of modern music as thoroughly in his way as the nineteenth-century romanticist was reared in the ideals of his own time. Mendelssohn amazed Goethe by his facility for improvisation and by playing Bach and Beethoven as no one had done before; Bernstein astonished his fellow students at Harvard by extemporizing as piano accompanist at the showings of historical films and by playing Stravinsky and Copland along with his own paraphrases of Russian folksongs to accompany *The Battleship Potemkin*. But while there is a marked difference between Mendelssohn the composer of virtuoso piano music and the creator of fairy music for the theatre, between the miniaturist of the *Songs Without Words* and the poet of the *Fingal's Cave* overture and the *Italian* and *Scotch* symphonies, between the composer of intimate home music and the master of the Biblical oratorio: Bernstein seems to have achieved a perfect blend of the many "souls in his breast". And it is there that musical analysis yields most interesting results and points to novel ways and means of expression.



The first movement of Bernstein's clarinet Sonata shows the young composer experimenting with Hindemithian polyphony, while in the second South American dance rhythms are creeping in; the Sonata, though a work amusing to perform and entertaining to listen to, can in no way be regarded as very personal or distinctive. But only a year later Bernstein finished his first full-length serious composition—and it remained the only one for six years—the *Jeremiah* Symphony, the last bars of which were written on December 31st, 1942. Though the idea of a Biblical symphony—particularly the prophetic wisdom of Jeremiah and its implications in our own time—had occupied the composer's mind for a long time (Bernstein's father, to whom the Symphony is dedicated, seems to have been instrumental in interesting the 24-year-old Leonard in the Jeremiah books), the actual composing had to be done in a hurry as some friends wanted Bernstein to take part in a contest. The score was completed in time for the competition, but it failed to interest the jury; the Symphony was not performed before the sensational Philharmonic Concert had attracted all America's attention—two months after that the Symphony was given its first performance in Pittsburgh, in January, 1944. Bernstein

had meanwhile written his ballet music, *Fancy Free*, and it is a striking experience to compare the serious and contemplative Symphony with the hilarious and carefree music for the dance stage.

The *Jeremiah* Symphony opens with a kind of motto theme which appears in various guises and variations throughout the three movements of the work. (Ex. 1.)

All the subsidiary themes in the first movement—which is a broad and expansive *Largamente*—are in some way related to either the horn melody or the derivative woodwind motive that sets in at its conclusion; the character of the latter especially gives birth to an important theme that characterizes episodes in all the three movements. The first movement is epic in mood and development; it bears the title “Prophecy”, but Bernstein has no wish to express a programme or idea, his intention is “not one of literalness, but of emotional quality”, and this movement “aims to parallel in feeling the intensity of the prophet’s pleas with his people”. The second movement, “Profanation”, is a grim scherzo, reflecting the destruction and chaos brought about by the pagan corruption within the priesthood and among the people. It is only here that the composer makes use of actual Hebrew material; the first subject is paraphrased from a traditional liturgical chant, but the strong accentuation and rhythmic variation lift the original tune to a purely musical level:

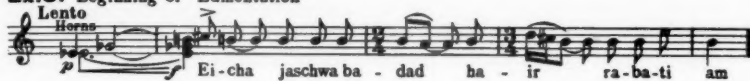
Ex. 2. Main Theme of Scherzo

Vivace con brio



The scherzo develops rapidly with increasing colour and dynamic force. In a kind of trio a choral-like theme from the first movement and fragments from other thematic motives are brought up for elaboration, and a horn call based on the main subject (Ex. 1) ushers in the scherzo reprise in which the barbaric dance strains are opposed by the prophetic theme played as a forceful counterpoint. Jeremiah’s mourning for his beloved Jerusalem, the ruined and dishonoured capital, is expressed in the third movement, the “Lamentation”, which takes the form of a symphonically elaborated song for solo voice and orchestra on words taken from the book of *Lamentations*, I, 1–3; I, 8; IV, 14–15; and V, 20–21, of which Bernstein has set to music the original Hebrew version. The music of this moving Lament derives from a version for soprano and piano which Bernstein had made when only 17 years old; but the song has been re-written and is now set for mezzo-soprano. The opening phrase uses a liturgical cadence still sung by Jews in commemoration of the destruction of Jerusalem by Babylon; the movement as a whole shows that the composer has derived inspiration for the entire Symphony from this vocal Lament:

Ex. 3. Beginning of “Lamentation”



The prophet's call as well as the choral strains and the lyrical derivations resound in this impressive Finale; in the coda we notice a plaintive strain in thirds which stems from the woodwind motive in Ex. 1, and the theme derived from it in the course of the first movement:



But while the theme proves to be nothing but a variation of the original horn call in the first movement, where it was played fortissimo, it has now become a sublimation of the prophetic utterance, concentrating on the falling cadence and dying out *pp*:



The Symphony ends pianissimo on a hopeful and confident note.

* * *

Though there is little in the *Jeremiah* Symphony of symphonic form and content in the conventional sense, the work is truly symphonic as far as its basic principles are concerned. A concentrated and logical development and elaboration of themes characterizes each of its movements; the relationship—partly identity—of the motives creates a strong feeling of unity between the parts; and the traditional contrasts of dramatic force, boisterous motion, and lyrical contemplation have remained their foundation, even if they appear in an order differing from that in the classical symphony. The themes are pregnant and impress themselves on the listener's memory; the rhythms get their sharp accents from the more complicated devices of the boogie-woogie or the South American dance; the harmony is what American terminology describes quite felicitously (after N. Slonimsky) as "pan-diatonic" (in contrast to the "pan-chromaticism" of atonality and the "harmonic chromaticism" of the late nineteenth century), tending towards a certain harmonic and tonal stagnation. The continuous contrasting of pulsating rhythm, mostly a-symmetrical and exciting in effect, and of calmly expressive melody on harmonically static backgrounds, gives Bernstein's music that immediate dramatic appeal which lies at the foundation of his success as performer as well as composer.

The style created by the *Jeremiah* Symphony—the roots of which we shall try to discover later on—dominates to an astonishing degree the ballet music

composed later, for here Bernstein was forced to shape his pieces to a given situation and could never count on his music being regarded as independent from action and dance. Yet the ballet music differs from the Symphony only in its being written in dance rhythm throughout.

Let us have a look at the score of *Fancy Free*. It consists of a Prologue, "Big Stuff", sung in typical sultry blues style by a crooner over the radio; an Opening Dance; Scene at the Bar; Pas de Deux; Competition Scene; Waltz Variation; Danzon Variation; Galop Variation; Finale. The story of the ballet concerns three sailors on leave (the story, but *not* the music, was used as basic material for the Broadway show *On The Town*, with new music by Bernstein), and the composer has summed up its content and mood in a few characteristic words:

"From the moment the action begins, with the sound of a juke box wailing behind the curtain, the ballet is strictly young America of 1944. The curtain rises on a street corner with a lamp post, a side street bar, and New York skyscrapers pricked out with a crazy pattern of lights making a dizzying backdrop. Three sailors explode on the stage; they are on shore leave in the city and on the prowl for girls. The tale of how they meet first one, then a second girl, and how they fight over them, lose them, and in the end take off after still a third, is the story of the ballet."

If "Young America of 1944" is the theme of the story, then the music, too, has a fundamental theme. Listening to it as recorded under the direction of the composer on American Decca, one feels that this swingly and motoric dance music has the same essential characteristics as the *Jeremiah* Symphony. The plaintive Prologue, the typical female crooner's blues ballad ("Saw you cry—what's it about, baby? You ask why blues had to go and pick you"), contains the musical material for most of the subsequent numbers, while a theme closely related to the main tune provides the subject matter for the remaining scenes. Melodic invention, rhythmic accentuation, and pandiatonic harmony characterise the *Fancy Free* music to the same extent as the Symphony; and the stylistic affinity goes so far as to allow the composer to give one of the two main themes a shape resembling a "Jeremiah" theme in an astounding way. Compare the falling cadence in thirds in Exs. 4 and 5 above with the opening of the "Scene at the Bar" in *Fancy Free*:

Ex. 6. "Scene at the Bar" from "*Fancy Free*" Str. pizz.

Clars. *no nuances* Celli D.B. pizz.

simple

etc.

Fancy Free is a real symphonic score, it is symphonic in orchestral treatment as well as in thematic elaboration, and I do not mean here the pseudo-symphonic style practised by many American jazz- and film-musicians from *Rhapsody in Blue* downwards; in his subsequent scores Bernstein has further developed the practice.

Yet while the comparison of Bernstein's serious and "utility music" confirms his singular unity of purpose and style and the successful blend in his works of most diverging musical elements, we can also penetrate by way of their essential traits to the roots of the young composer's style. His teachers in composition included the American composers Edward Burlingame Hill, A. Tillman Merritt, Randall Thompson and Walter Piston—and the strong Hindemithian flavour in his early work may be due to the latter's influence. But his actual master—one of his closest friends in fact and a composer whose music he performs wherever he can—was Aaron Copland. The South American strains in his clarinet Sonata and in the ballet music quite obviously stem from Copland's hilariously funny *El Salón México* (which, incidentally, Bernstein arranged for piano solo), while the pan-diatonic treatment of themes and the preference for the falling cadence in thirds also strike the listener in Copland's music. Compare, for instance, the music examples from Bernstein's *Jeremiah* Symphony and the *Fancy Free* music (Exs. 4, 5 and 6) with the motto theme of Aaron Copland's piano Sonata (written two years before the *Jeremiah*):

Ex. 7. Beginning of Aaron Copland's Piano Sonata
Molto moderato (*freesly expressive*)



and its subsequent shape:

Ex. 8. — from Third Movement
Andante sostenuto



Nor is this style new in the piano Sonata of 1939/40; Copland had not changed much since his *Music for the Theatre* of 1925, and only in some recent works—notably the third Symphony (1946)—is there some novel development and growth in his style. Rhythmic peculiarities also bring Copland (born in 1900) and Bernstein (born in 1918) closely together.

It would be unjust, though, to describe the younger master as merely a disciple or follower of the elder. The broad conception of his works and the long line of his melodies make Bernstein's style distinguishable from Copland's, in which the steady contrasting of melodic and rhythmic elements is much more striking; Copland is not a romanticist to the same degree as Bernstein.

The Age of Anxiety, Leonard Bernstein's most recent work, large portions of which were completed during a two-month conducting tour of Israel in the autumn of 1948, while the final movement was written in Boston in Spring, 1949, is interesting for a number of features. First, there is the programmatic background of W. H. Auden's nostalgic Third Avenue eclogue, which Bernstein certainly chose for its slightly neurotic character and its affinity with the matter he had used for music before: it is three sailors and two girls in *Fancy Free* and *On the Town*; it is a solitary woman and two men—one passionate and the other sophisticated—in *Facsimile*; in *The Age of Anxiety* it is a nostalgic, disappointed woman discussing Life with three men in a Third Avenue bar. Of his music for *Facsimile*, Bernstein said:

"The inspiration of Jerome Robbins' scenario, with its profoundly moving psychological implications, entered into the music to a degree which, I believe, produced what one might almost call a neurotic music, mirroring the psychological tensions of the characters involved."

In the new work, the same neurotic quality is present, though slightly toned down; looking back to *Fancy Free* and even to *Jeremiah*, we can retrospectively feel the composer's pre-occupation with subjects laden with inner nervous tension and a slightly nostalgic touch.


The second characteristic feature in *The Age of Anxiety*, called by Bernstein "an essay in loneliness", is its formal design. The work takes the form of a symphony with piano solo and is described by the composer as his "Symphony No. 2"; it is in six parts, following the structure of Auden's poem. The Prologue states the nostalgic main theme, played by two clarinets in echo-tone, *ppp*, *Lento*, without any accompaniment:

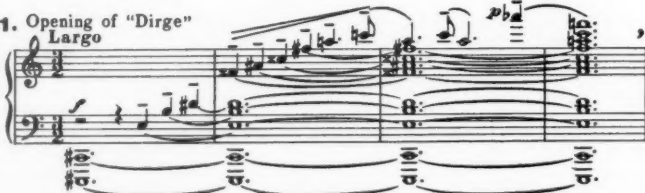


The Prologue is followed by twice seven variations, the first set concerned with "The Seven Ages" and the second styled "The Seven Stages"; though

there is a pause between them, Bernstein regards the Prologue and 14 variations as really the first movement of the entire work. Each of the variations is conceived in different tempo, different rhythm, and different mood—though musically each depends on the preceding one, they are not related to each other in spirit and feeling. There follows a Dirge—the musical counterpart of the passage where Auden mourns the passing of leaders from the world; after a short piano prelude (Ex. 11) and a heavy string theme (Ex. 12), there comes a long piano solo, followed by a violent, passionate outburst; when it subsides, we reach a plaintive violin melody (Ex. 14) which ushers in the coda of the lament. The Dirge is followed by a “nightmare of a scherzo”: The Masque; this is scored for piano solo with percussion, its crazy jazziness symbolizing the drunken fit. When the orchestra comes plunging into the end of this movement, it shows the emptiness and pretence of the Masque. The Epilogue sets in without pause; the feeling of loneliness breaks through again, but Bernstein—contrary to Auden—gives his work an optimistic ending: the protagonists’ fate and experience allow them to face the reality of Life.

The third interesting feature of Bernstein’s latest work is his stylistic development. *The Age of Anxiety* shows him matured and self-certain, original, and critical. New is the expressive chromaticism—sometimes almost leading to twelve-tone themes—as in the flute passage leading over from the Prologue to the variations (Ex. 10) and the opening of the Dirge (Ex. 11):

Ex. 10. Flute Solo

pp legatissimo

Ex. 11. Opening of “Dirge”
 Largo

 Piano Solo

while Bernstein retains the heavy chord shifts that characterize most of his music, and which have roots in Copland as well as Stravinsky:

Ex. 12. 
 Strings con sord.
f pesante etc.

Increased expressiveness is reached by the melodic chromaticism as well as by expressionist leaps in melody and figuration:



* * *

Leonard Bernstein is a composer only the North America of the twentieth century could produce; he belongs to the second generation who do not speak American with a European accent but that American tongue which many purists on the *old* continent resent. Most certainly he still has his future before him, and it is hoped that he will be wise enough not to waste his genius in performance only—how sadly had Mendelssohn (and the musical world) to pay for the intensity of his life and the strain of over-work!—yet the distinctive features of a personal style are developed in a number of truly outstanding contributions to contemporary music. The virtuosity in the handling of technical devices and in orchestration, the maturity of his musical outlook, and the dramatic strength of his music are astonishing for a young man just past thirty; while the profound beauty and wisdom in the pages of the *Jeremiah* Symphony impress as extraordinary.

The time is over when "jazz influence" was a factor that seemed superimposed upon a musical work in America; Bernstein's homogeneous style proves that American music has reached a new, a higher stage of development. Just as in the earth-bound music of other nations a synthesis between folklore elements and the foundations of art music ploughed the soil on which a truly great musical art could grow and flourish, there may be in America a promising solution for its young musical art in the blending of jazz elements—reflecting the tempo and vitality of the country's life—and of general contemporary tendencies. His striking talents have made Leonard Bernstein a leading exponent of trends that open a new chapter in American musical history; whether he will be a central and towering figure in general depends on his own strength and endurance in creation as well as on the hidden potentialities with which nature has endowed him.

How conscious Leonard Bernstein is of the problems of versatility and how seriously he takes his various tasks can well be measured from his own confession frequently quoted in the United States:

"It is impossible for me to make an exclusive choice among the various activities of conducting, symphonic composition, writing for the theatre, or playing the piano.

What seems right for me at any given moment is what I must do, at the expense of pigeon-holing or otherwise limiting my services to music. I will not compose a note while my heart is engaged in a conducting season; nor will I give up writing so much as a popular song, while it is there to be expressed, in order to conduct Beethoven's Ninth. There is a particular order involved in this, which is admittedly difficult to plan; but the order must be adhered to most strictly. For the ends are music itself, not the conventions of the music business; and the means are my own personal problem."

The solution of the creative artist's problems are the concern of every lover of music who has at heart the development and future of musical art in our troubled times.

Book Reviews

Debussy. By Rolfe H. Myers. Pp. 125. (Duckworth.) 1948. 4s. 6d.

R. H. Myers' addition to Duckworth's "Great Lives" series is presumably what was required. It is what might be termed a chaperone biography: in its prim way it makes little attempt to bring its subject to life for fear of unearthing things not quite respectable. The figure of Debussy fails to stir in these pages, not because (as Myers says) "there was something phantom-like about his personality", but because the author's approach is not vigorous enough. This is not to assert that a biographer should begin by dredging the seamy side of his subject's life, nor that he should seek the obvious method of poking into his affairs with women: on the contrary, these things should be put in their place, which is what this author avoids doing. Note the studied casualness with which Debussy's mistress "Gaby" is first mentioned (p. 43), as if the reader were already acquainted with something which, by mutual agreement, should not be pursued. In spite of its lack of characterization and its rather maidenly style, this book is a useful short guide to the main events in Debussy's life and it contains a complete list of his works.

The Music Masters (Vol. I). Ed. by A. L. Bacharach. Pp. 366. (Maurice Fridberg.) 1948. 15s.

This is a delightful compendium indeed. The first of four volumes, it covers the period from Palestrina to Beethoven (inclusive) and contains life-sketches of many minor figures as well as of the outstanding ones. It is a real asset to have biographical details (and occasional critical comment) on such men as Boccherini (Robert S. Elkin), Cherubini (W. R. Anderson), Couperin (Alec Robertson), Dittersdorf (A. Hyatt King), Lully (Colin Mason), Méhul (A. Hyatt King), Sweelinck (Scott Goddard), and Vivaldi (Leslie Orrey): these are not the only famous but neglected composers to be found in this book. Colin Mason's lusty account of Lully should not be missed. Most of the contributions are of a high standard of style and content: if one has to mention especially good examples, one might select Scott Goddard on Sweelinck, W. McNaught on Handel (ending with the whole book's most trenchant observation, ". . . *And in any event, Handel did not borrow the thoughts of others; he rescued them*"). Dyneley Hussey on Mozart, and E. H. W. Meyerstein on Dussek. There are, as is inevitable, some important omissions, not all of which can be explained away by lack of necessary information. In some future edition it should be possible to include both the Gabrielis, Schütz, Buxtehude, Telemann, and J. W. A. Stamitz.

R. S.

In Memoriam Hans Pfitzner

BY

HANS F. REDLICH

HANS PFITZNER, who died at Salzburg on 22nd May, 1949, a few days after his 80th birthday, belongs with the surviving Richard Strauss to the royal line of the Wagner tradition. With his undisputed masterpiece, the musical legend *Palestrina* (1917) he created—almost a whole decade after Strauss' most successful operas—the last Music-drama in the trail of Bayreuth to arouse and hold the musical attention of German-speaking audiences through more than 30 years. Pfitzner embarked on his operatic career with *Der arme Heinrich* in 1895, a year after Humperdinck's *Hänsel und Gretel* had demonstrated that Wagner's style of realistic declamation could be applied successfully to a simple fairy tale. Pfitzner, no less uncompromising a Wagnerian, took his cue from the subtly chromaticized music accompanying the death agonies of Tristan. In his first opera this kind of music covers the whole canvas of James Grun's rather trite versification of the mediaeval German legend, in which a plague-stricken knight à la Tannhäuser is at last healed and redeemed through the self-sacrificing offices of an innocent maiden à la Elsa. In his next opera, *Die Rose vom Liebesgarten* (1901), Pfitzner asserts himself in a style of effusive and colourful Romanticism, culminating in folk-melodies and purely orchestral episodes of great descriptive beauty. This opera, suffering from the inanities of its symbolized libretto, reveals Pfitzner's spiritual relationship with the early German Romantics, like Weber and E. T. A. Hoffmann, the latter's *Undine* (1817) being successfully revived with Pfitzner as editor and conductor. Only in his third great operatic work did Pfitzner arrive at his full musical stature. Its libretto (written by the composer himself in true Wagnerian fashion and headed by a very humanistic quotation from Schopenhauer's *The World as Will and Idea*) deals with one of the most topical cultural problems of the day: the relationship between artist and authority, as reflected in the struggle between ecclesiastic hierarchs, politicians and composers, to preserve the dignity of liturgical music at the time of the Council of Trent. Pfitzner's self-identifying sympathies are clearly with the highly individualistic artist Palestrina, who refuses to submit to official pressure, following only the promptings of his own genius. The creative outcome of this spiritual combat is the *Missa Papae Marcelli*, which is conceived in a scene of ecstatic fervour against a sonorous background of angelic voices and ghostly apparitions of Palestrina's predecessors. The callousness of official politics, vividly expressed in the fact of Palestrina's brutal arrest and the factitious uproar at the end of the Council session (end of act II) are finally contradicted by the highest authority, humbling itself in Cardinal Borromeo before the spiritually triumphant artist and honouring him, the shattered vessel of a higher ethical message, by the Pope's personal visit. This solution, which in the eternal conflict, artist versus authority, so unmistakably sides with the former is characteristic of Pfitzner's cultural outlook. Those, who have had occasion to arouse the displeasure of authority in totalitarian countries, know, to their dismay, how different reality is from Pfitzner's imaginary Papal Rome.

Pfitzner's music in this work successfully integrates the sonorities of mediaeval and Renaissance music into the orbit of a highly individual post-Wagnerian opera style, uniting typical features of *Meistersinger* and *Parsifal* with the composer's peculiar conception of modal harmony, and painting on a vivid canvas the legend of the dying middle ages and the upsurging Renaissance, as reflected in the history of Italy's ecclesiastic music of that particular period. The performance of this work (Munich, 1917) was the high-water mark in the composer's career, who from now on was considered a public figure in his country, receiving in rich measure the customary honours and titles due to a German composer of highest distinction. Unfortunately, in later years Pfitzner became more notorious for his tiresome polemical quarrels with Busoni, Alban Berg, Paul Bekker

and others on the controversial subject of "Modern Music" (as conceived by the reformers of 1918), than famed for new creative exploits. Like his master Richard Wagner, he had an uncanny aptitude for turning the admirers of his music into implacable enemies of his various writings. This is a pity, as Pfitzner, the composer, proved in later years capable of remarkable development in the field of choral, symphonic and chamber music. His rather unequal Cantata *Von deutscher Seele* (1921), on beautiful poems by Eichendorff, is only a symphonic excrescence from his many inspired *lieder*, but his early string Quartet and piano Quintet pave the way to so daring and uncompromising a work as the string Quartet in C sharp minor, op. 36 (composed in 1925 and turned into a Symphony in 1932), a clear offspring of the late quartets of Beethoven and acoustically related to certain characteristics of atonality. Pfitzner, who seemed happiest when inspired by romantic subjects, composed a charming Christmas opera *Das Christelflein* (first composed in 1906 as incidental music to a play, turned into a full opera in 1917), besides incidental music to Ibsen's *Fest auf Solhaug* and Kleist's *Kühchen von Heilbronn*. A late opera *Das Herz* (1931), on an impossible libretto, proved a failure but a spate of concertos and works of symphonic character during the last decades showed that his fervour had not abated, even if the gulf between him and the younger generation in Germany had become more pronounced than ever.

Pfitzner, who was born in 1869 in Moscow of German parents, spent a great part of his life as a conductor, opera director and later as a distinguished academician in various German music centres. Years spent in Strasbourg (1908-16) before it had returned to France, may have fostered his inherent rabid nationalism. This made him *persona non grata* in the Weimar Republic as well as in the Third Reich. His perverse predilection for galling polemics even involved him in serious conflicts with Nazi authoritarians, just as his *Furor teutonicus* before had shocked his many friends from liberal quarters. Among these were Gustav Mahler (who conducted a magnificent performance of *Die Rose* at the Vienna State Opera in 1905 and whose wife specially befriended him), Bruno Walter (who conducted the first performance of *Palestrina* in Munich, 1917) and Thomas Mann (who in his *Betrachtungen eines Unpolitischen* (1918), published a masterly assessment of *Palestrina* and of its creator's Schopenhauer-inspired "sympathy with death"). Pfitzner was never an Antisemite or a Nazi, he belonged with all the regrettable characteristics of his nagging and exasperating personality to an earlier stratum of German cultural life: to the nationalist-minded Romantics like Goerres, Jahn and Arndt. He stood uncompromisingly for the universality of the humanistic world-conception, and for the preservation of the rich inheritance, passed on to posterity by Classicism and the Romantic movement. He lovingly edited E. T. A. Hoffmann and Schumann, cleverly interpreted Wagner and ingeniously absorbed wide tracts of mediaeval music concepts into his own musical language. His settings of Eichendorff poems are not unworthy successors of Schumann's *Liederkreis* and Hugo Wolf's *Eichendorfflieder*, while his few essays in chamber music reveal him as a most imaginative guardian of the classical tradition.

Pfitzner's music has a distinct flavour of its own, something intensely German in its mixture of ponderous, often scholarly (but never academic) historicism and nostalgic romantic effusiveness. For that reason it does not travel well and seems condemned to eternal parochial fame much like Bruckner's symphonies. Pfitzner shares with Bruckner the regrettable fate in this country of never having been given a fair deal. No better amends could be made than to grant the dead what has so far been denied to the living artist: a fair hearing. A performance of *Palestrina* would, if prepared in a spirit of sympathetic understanding, go a long way to prove that in an epoch so devoid of great creative personalities we can ill afford to ignore the artistic message of this late musical humanist.

Ernest Walker

BY

ROBIN HULL

THERE have been memorable tributes to Ernest Walker* as scholar and composer, but something can still be added, perhaps, about his personality as well as his influence upon those who came into contact with him at Oxford. The following impressions derive only from a brief period of Walker's long and active career—the late nineteen-twenties—yet it was a period that contained some of his most valuable contributions to the musical life of the University.

Any hasty or superficial observer of Walker at that time might wonder, indeed, how so deep and vital an influence could proceed from this tall, stooping, rather angular man, with his apparent diffidence of manner, his meditative swing of head and beard, and a chromatic speech that seemed to skid over three octaves before dissolving in a sepulchral explosion. But only the least observant would fail to appreciate, on closer acquaintance, the supreme qualities of mind and character which constituted the real man, and earned for him not only an immense respect but also an affection which respect alone does not always command. These qualities were revealed in a complete and natural integrity of thought combined with an extraordinary sensitivity of perception. It was impossible for him to be discourteous even under provocation, though no one could be more outspoken in the face of slipshod argument, and his rare demonstrations of anger were reserved for inescapable evidence of cheap or vulgar musicianship. Walker's acute and enquiring mind was balanced by a refreshing scepticism forbidding him to take any account whatever of conventional opinion or pedagogic piety in forming his own judgment, and it was largely this absolute concern with the nature of the music itself which made him so stimulating a guide. He was surpassed by no one in his knowledge and appreciation of Handel but here, as elsewhere, Walker was incapable of blind worship.

"No other composer can even attempt to rival Handel in his power of intensely irritating those who have the strongest and sanest admiration for his genius; no one, it is true, is always at his best, but the pity is that Handel is so very often at his worst."

The range of his knowledge was vast, yet this would have signified less without the alliance of his first-rate intellect and razor-like perspicuity, or without that breadth of sympathy with which he has not always been credited. He has often been described as essentially classical in his preferences, but it should be added that he had an equally thorough and masterly grasp of what was going on in contemporary music, though his genial scepticism prevented him from being too easily impressed by what he heard. An achievement that will never be forgotten by those who happened to be in Oxford at the time was his brilliant handling of the piano part of Bartók's first violin Sonata. It is quite certain that he would have declined to lavish his time upon this formidable task without an absolute conviction of the music's worth, and a determination that the undergraduate audience should be given an opportunity to hear the work. Probably he did more than anyone else, during the turbulent and exciting nineteen-twenties, to hold a fair balance at Oxford between the claims of classical and contemporary music. This was a remarkable accomplishment at a time when one set of extremists desired above all things to consign Beethoven to the rubbish-heap at the earliest possible moment, and another set were of the opinion that the performance of any work more recent than Debussy's string Quartet must inaugurate a period of anarchy calculated to imperil the very existence of the University.

The exceptional inspiration of Walker as a teacher was due, in great measure, to the sheer musicianship with which he envisaged every problem in its entirety while concentrating the most scrupulous care upon detail. Any pupil who came to him was obliged

* 1870-1949.

quickly to shed the notion that a musical issue would be settled by dogmatic pronouncement. No doubt the kind of young man who prospered least was he who demanded certainties swiftly and at whatever cost to precision. He would find himself at first bewildered, and then maddened, by the impossibility of obtaining a text-book answer to an academic question, and the more closely he pressed his enquiries the more courteously elusive Walker would become. This refusal to lay down the law sprang, of course, from precisely that exact thought and breadth of culture that forbade Walker to suppress any qualifying clause without which an answer would be worthless. And he had, perhaps, a natural distaste for being treated as an ever-ready encyclopaedia in respect of some matter which the young man could quite well have discovered for himself. It was a different affair altogether if he found that the pupil was quick to receive and act upon a hint, and in such cases there was no limit to the trouble he would take. Any gap in his listener's knowledge merely elicited a surprised "Oh, don't you remember it?"—no irony was intended—and in a moment Walker would be surrounded by books, music, and papers of every description, conducting a fascinating voyage of discovery which, however numerous the discursions, invariably reached the end in view. He accepted examinations in music for their limited value, but only with reluctance, and on this subject his pen could be sharp. "It is the special eccentricity of English musicians to travel up and down the country passing and 'plucking' children all day long." He was ready to endorse the letter of musical custom provided that it was sensible, never to commend a rule simply for its own sake, and at the best he regarded the observance of such things as secondary to an ability truly to perceive the nature and spirit of the music. He was, indeed, a great musician in all that he did, and it is as a great musician that his name is held in honour.

The Twenty-third I.S.C.M. Festival in Sicily

BY

PETER GRADENWITZ

THIS year's Festival of the International Society for Contemporary Music was remarkable for a number of reasons. First, there was a greater variety of styles and schools presented this year than on previous occasions; second, a number of "side-shows" were designed by the organizers of the Festival to create a link between the visitors and the place of the meeting; third, for (I believe) the first time in the history of the I.S.C.M. political and pseudo-political issues entered the discussions in the Delegates' Assembly. It must be said that each of the three points had its beneficial as well as its disadvantageous sides: by no means the best works were chosen to represent the diverging trends of our period; the generosity of the Society's Sicilian hosts was such that the "official" concerts came generally at the end of a day crowded with events and memorable experience; and while the political colouring of some of the debates contributed much to our knowledge of the Society's standing these days it also prevented any unbiased, far-reaching planning of future activities.

The weakness of the programmes in spite of their manysidedness is amply explained—as it could be last year—by the narrow outlook even the most competent of international jurors seem to have of their job. For the first time this year, the central office distributed a list of works submitted to the jury by the national sections, from which it seems that the jurors had to choose among some 130 compositions in all fields of music. Statistics show that of the 34 sections represented in the I.S.C.M., works by members of 13 were performed in 1946 (London), of 16 in 1947 (Copenhagen), of 15 in 1948 (Amsterdam) and of 14 in 1949 (Palermo). The juries from 1946 to 1950 drew members from 14 of the 34 sections;

20 sections were never represented in any official body of the I.S.C.M., while 13 sections had no performances at all and three sections one performance each in the post-war festivals listed above.

I have no desire to draw unjustified conclusions from my statistics, the more as among the jurors there have been some of the most generous and competent musicians of our time. But in music, as in literature and painting, being a creative artist must mean taking sides, and only a genius of rare vision will be able to judge in a truly detached way the work of a fellow-composer whom he may personally like very much but to whose style and language he is diametrically opposed. You have only to read what Stravinsky says about the Russians or the average English musician on Schönberg in order to understand what prejudice means. This year's jury was composed of four musicians from Latin countries and one Austrian; the result: six works (out of 28!) by French composers, two Belgian, two Italian, two Swiss, one French-Roumanian—a total of 13 "sympathizing" nationals as far as style is concerned, against 15 "others" that included 3 British, 2 Czech, 1 Hungarian, 1 Brazilian, 1 Chilean, 1 German, 2 Austrian, 1 Danish, 1 Dutch, 1 Independent. Statistically speaking, I very much doubt whether France has the leading position in contemporary music that seems reflected in a choice of six works for any Festival; musically speaking, the works presented at the Festival confuted this clearly. In Amsterdam last year and in Copenhagen the year before each country represented in the jury had three compositions included in the Festival programmes, while others fared with one or at most two works. And the lists also show that none of the "big countries" ever failed to get a place in the Festival, though geographical or political importance does not necessarily mean musical leadership as well. The solution of the problem seems to lie in a more sensible choice of jurors: they should be elected to form a body reflecting all the important trends in contemporary music—dodecaphonism, folklorism, neoclassicism should have their understanding representatives, and temperaments as different as the Slavonic and the Latin should be included. This year's twelve-tone works were badly chosen by a clearly unfamiliar jury, and there is no juror next year who could voice an authentic opinion about this so widely discussed and certainly dominant issue of contemporary musical art.

No real revelation can be recorded among this year's musical events. The most "modern" work performed was Schönberg's *Pierrot lunaire*, composed almost forty years ago and performed in honour of the master's 75th birthday this September by Marya Freund and an Italian ensemble; next in interest came the fine lyrical *Notturmi* by H. J. Koellreutter (Brazil) for contralto and string quartet, Riccardo Nielsen's *Music for Strings* and Dallapiccola's *Rencesvals* for voice and piano (the latter two works not included in the "official" programmes), and Wladimir Woronow's (Belgian) attempt to write a musical "Sonnet" ("Sonetto a Dallapiccola") to imitate the poetical form in a musical setting. Among the works for full orchestra the most impressive were the second Symphony by Kabelac (Czechoslovakia) and *Orphée* by Martinet (France), both works based on the romantic and post-romantic symphonic tradition but containing elements of progress and originality. A composition of great inner dynamic force is Serge Nigg's *Variations for piano and ten instruments*, and another work of interest was Hans-Erich Apostel's string Quartet in which the Austrian composer uses a theme by his master Alban Berg. The chamber operas were Casella's *Favolo d'Orfeo*, Elizabeth Lutyens' moving *The Pit*, and Jean Françaix' hilariously entertaining yet superficial *Diable Boîteux*. The remaining works were the unfinished string Quartet of Willem Pijper, and quartets by Schibler and Borkovec; *Canti di morte* for voice and instruments by Contilli; orchestral music by Wladimir Vogel, Humphrey Searle, Marcel Mihalovici, Victor Legley, and the Italians Petrassi and Ghedini; vocal music by Juan Orrego Salas and Jean Binet; concertante works by Mátyás Seiber and Bruno Maderna. A number of works were definitely out of place in a Festival of the kind: a brilliant virtuoso Sonata by Henri Dutilleux, the charmingly pseudo-classical (not "neo" of any kind) Berkeley piano Concerto, a salon composition by Charles Koechlin, and a conspicuously uninspired Concerto for string orchestra by Tommasini.

Among the attractions offered by the Sicilian hosts two must be singled out for their topical interest: the Festival was opened by a performance of Karol Szymanowski's opera *Le Roi Roger*, whose hero is the twelfth century Norman King of Sicily who resided at Palermo; it closed in the picturesque Greco-Roman amphitheatre of Taormina with a performance of *The Cyclops* by Euripides, the scene of which legend lays in the very same spot where Taormina is situated to-day. At a visit out in the country, the delegates were entertained with popular music of Sicily, and Italy's great musical past was remembered when Mass was celebrated in Monreale Cathedral to the sounds of the music of Palestrina.

The interference of politics and clashing ideologies obtruded themselves upon the delegates when the Eastern-European sections of the I.S.C.M. discussed with the West the cultural work of UNESCO and the place for the coming Festival. Russia is not represented in the I.S.C.M. but the Czech Section serves as Soviet spokesman; the U.S.A. was not represented this year either as some differences between them and the central office had not been cleared away in time. It is interesting to note, too, that one part of the delegates left Sicily to attend the First World Congress for twelve-tone music at Milan, while another hurried to Prague to take part in the Congress of Progressive Musicians and Musicologists organized by the Czech Composers' Syndicate.

The non-collaboration of Soviet Russia and of the United States on the one hand and the unjustifiable exclusion from the I.S.C.M. offices and programmes of more than a third of its acknowledged active Sections (13 out of 34) make the Society's Internationality a myth, at least for the time being; to restore its scope and horizon and to look out for new horizons and fields of activities are its dominant tasks in the near future. UNESCO is offering the realization of world-wide schemes that can become of immense importance for creative musicians; organizational failures and the narrow outlook of its jurors have robbed the I.S.C.M.—let us pray only temporarily—of its erstwhile impetus and verve. Close co-operation with the progressive elements, whatever their ideology or credo, in all countries of the world, big or small, and a drastic revision of its Festival policy can alone restore to the Society that spirit that drove its founders to start upon their work. For only when the Society as a whole breathes that youthful spirit can the individual sections and the composers creating in their midst derive the full benefit of the progress achieved by the great masters of contemporary music and by the no less important experimenters of the period. The very statutes of the Society are there to remind its officers of its objects: to cultivate contemporary music of value without regard to the nationality, political opinions or religion of the composer; to protect and encourage especially those tendencies which are experimental and difficult of approach, to represent and safeguard the artistic ideals which contemporary musicians have in common.

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P. H.	— PAUL HAMBURGER
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Hallé Concerts

BY

JOHN BOULTON

13th January. The orchestra and Barbirolli began this year with fine performances in one of the season's most interesting programmes. We heard the Hallé strings play *Verklärte Nacht* for the first time in their history; this work, in its orchestral version, has possibly never had a finer performance. Notwithstanding Dehmel's poem, it is unrewarding to attempt a literary reading of the wonderful tissue of sound the words inspired in Schönberg. We were saddened to see around so many who should have been listening, probably for the first time, wrestling with the programme notes provided. *Mathis der Maler* and Schumann's fourth Symphony each received entirely satisfying performances. The brass are deservedly famous and their attack in Hindemith's work was electrifying. The Hallé make frequent use of orchestral players in virtuoso works, and it must be said that performances more than merely adequate are the result as a rule. Tonight provided a case in point with the harp in Debussy's *Danse sacré et danse profane*.

10th February. Boyd Neel, his orchestra and a group of well known soloists filled the evening with Brandenburg Concertos Nos. 2, 3, 4 and 5, and we loved every minute of it. Could we have had the encore all hoped for, it would have been from No. 2 in F. Gareth Morris' flute, Leonard Brain's oboe, George Eskdale's trumpet and Maurice Clare's violin shared glories in a performance we have never heard excelled. No. 3 in G showed us whence the Boyd Neel fame derives: clean, alert observance of the relentless but unobtrusively precise beat and the unequivocal gesture, with all concerned as much alive as if playing this, their most played work, for the first time. The additional flute of Arthur Hedges and Miles Coverdale's continuo were impeccable in No. 4, and if Joan Davies' piano solos in No. 5 tended to be rather too much her own, we forgave her excursions into subjective feeling because the orchestra always seemed to rescue her just in time.

23rd February. Two symphonies were given; the Sibelius Seventh and the Tchaikovsky Fourth. The performances were at the orchestra's highest level and we could feel that all there was in these two big works was reaching us. And we learned what a wonderfully apt foil each is for the other: the man of grit and the man of tears, each with the iron in his soul, but one looking outwards and one inwards. How much, these days, we need Sibelius' message, and how important not to heed Tchaikovsky's.

Iso Elinson did what could be done with the fourth Concerto of Rachmaninov. The composer has said all there is in this work in Concerto No. 3 so much more expertly. The most taking feature of the work is a series of conversations between the piano and solo instruments: flute, oboe, cor anglais, bassoons and horn, each have something to say and it was all said most expressively. Stick and piano achieved cross purposes during the finale, but it did not seem to matter, since the composer's intentions were painfully, boringly obvious.

A pleasant occasion and a very sound little work were provided by Richard Tildesley, a member of the orchestra. His *Legend No. 1* for strings deserved the comradely care given by the orchestra to its first performance.

9th March. Here we were privileged to see justice done to all sides of British orchestral music. Vaughan Williams' sixth Symphony is one of the great works of this age and it was played in a manner fitting to its greatness. Much has already been written about the work itself. We would offer no subjective analysis; any such that were made of, say, the First Brahms or the Seventh Bruckner when they arrived are properly forgotten, and cannot have mattered much at the time. This music is imperishable; we can think of no work in our lifetime which has been stamped so certainly for posterity. The great man who composed it has written the kind of testament that Beethoven left in the last quartets. It remains for us to take it in.

For the rest of the evening, Mozart's *Impresario* overture got a delicious performance, Strauss' suite, *Le Bourgeois Gentilhomme* was played with subtlety and great humour and Ravel's *La Valse* with due ripeness of tone and dynamic *élan*. Thanks to Barbirolli's

brilliant detail in the last named work, we realized something for the first time: in *La Valse* are to be found subtly paraphrased quotations not only from the Strausses but also from Waldteufel, Offenbach and so many other writers of *la valse* that we lost count. This was the season's best concert.

24th March. Nicolai Malko conducted a dull programme consisting of: Rimsky-Korsakov: *Easter Festival* overture; Borodin: second Symphony; Wagner: *Prelude and Liebestod from Tristan* and *Ride of the Valkyries*; Prokofiev: *Lieutenant Kije*. This collection of well known pieces, salted with a suite of Prokofiev's film music, illustrates beautifully the point we have previously made about Hallé programme presentation, *viz.*: they cannot, and must not go on pretending that the midweek concerts cater for one public and the "popular" Sundays for another. The practice does nothing more than mislead young people. Possibly the combination of Malko and three Russian works was intended to provide an experience of unusual finesse. It did not. Prokofiev's fifteen year old music to a Russian film is jejeune, and as meretricious as most successful background music. Borodin's B minor Symphony is wearing as badly as most music of its kind and the Rimsky overture provides an essay in that composer's major weaknesses. Yet, all can be very well worth re-hearing in the hands of a conductor who can bring out the individual flavours of each. That did not happen, and we saw why when this evening's conductor failed utterly to bring the *Tristan* music to life. All the same, the orchestra went home happy. They let themselves go in the "*Ride*" and revealed the glory of their brass in all its exhilarating excellence.

To this sorrowful account must be added one wild and all too lengthy misreading of her part by a harp in *Kije* and a most unfortunate oboe entry in the *Tristan* excerpt. We are not used to these things from the Hallé and when they happen they hit the harder for it.

Manchester badly needs some visiting conductors of first rank by whom to measure John Barbirolli. The present policy is as unfair to him as it is to the orchestra and the public.

21st April. This concert was given by The Residentie Orchestra of the Hague under their conductor Jan Out, and was Manchester's share of an exchange arrangement which can only have favoured the Dutch who stayed at home.

We heard two modern Dutch works. Wagenaar's overture *The Taming of the Shrew* owes so much to the thematic matter and the orchestration of *Don Juan* that we found it impossible to be fair to the composer in searching out original thought; the ear forced the mind to an exhausting hunt for points of departure from Strauss. Symphony No. 3 by the contemporary composer Léon Orthel was of greater interest. Here was much originality and occasionally a telling episode. There was also one of the longest pedal points ever, clearly intended to be the drone of aeroplanes, and the "V" sign quotation from Beethoven clearly intended to be what it was. Music inspired by the war is in the same case as novels similarly begotten. They are not all inspired and they are, as here, often loosely episodic in plan. But, unlike a novel, no amount of episodic colour can save a symphony which has no structure. Against any judgment of Mr. Orthel's work, however, had to be set the serious shortcomings of the orchestra and its conductor.

The evening's most lamentable experience was *Daphnis and Chloe* (2nd Suite). Since the end of November, 1947, this work has been played seven times at Hallé Concerts. Every time we hear it we agree that John Barbirolli does it very beautifully, and hope he will mislay the score for a season or so. This time we wished Mr. Out had been present at one of the six recent performances. He would, we think, have let the matter rest there.

In Rachmaninov's 3rd Concerto the orchestra played to a passable standard for most of the time. This may have had something to do with the brilliance of the piano protagonist. Cyril Smith played magnificently. In spite of being presented with the back view of Mr. Out, in spite of having to meet that gentleman's apprehensive backward glance at every entry, in spite of having all his solos conducted by a sweeping stick, he gave an impassioned and faultless contribution to a performance which the Dutch orchestra will remember much longer than we shall.

Concerts

FIRST PERFORMANCES*

- I. Oscar Straus, Overture to *Here Comes the Music*. (Philharmonia Orchestra, c. Straus, Albert Hall, 8th May.)
- II. Oscar Straus, Intermezzo from *Here Comes the Music*. (Philharmonia Orchestra, c. Straus, Albert Hall, 15th May.)
- III. Lambert, *Trois pièces nègres sur les touches blanches*, for piano duet. (L.C.M.C., Mary and Geraldine Peppin, Concert Hall, Broadcasting House, 17th May.)
- IV. Searle, *Gold Coast Customs* (Poem by Edith Sitwell), for 2 Speakers, Male Chorus, Chamber Orchestra, 2 Pianos and Percussion. (Sitwell, Lambert, Mary and Geraldine Peppin, B.B.C. Chorus, section of Philharmonia Orchestra, c. Lucas. Same concert as III.)
- V. Mellers, Two Motets *In Diem Pacis*, for Chorus and Brass. (B.B.C. Chorus, Section of Philharmonia Orchestra, c. Woodgate. Same concert as III.)
- VI. Mellers, *News from Greece*, Cantata for Mezzo Soprano, Mixed Chorus, Three Trumpets, Two Pianos and Percussion. (Esther Salaman, Helen Pyke, Paul Hamburger, W.M.A. Singers, c. Bush, King George's Hall, 16th June.)
- VII. Seiber, *Ulysses*, Cantata for Tenor, Chorus and Orchestra. (Lewis, Morley College Choir, Kalmar Orchestra, c. Goehr, Central Hall, 27th May.)
- VIII. Julius Harrison, Mass in C. (Baillie, McArthur, Lewis, Cummings, Hallé Choir, B.B.C. Northern Orchestra, c. Groves, from the Town Hall, Manchester, Home Service, 29th May.)
- IX. R. Strauss, 2nd Horn Concerto in E flat. (Brain, Chelsea Symphony Orchestra, c. Del Mar, Chelsea Town Hall, 31st May.)
- X. André Caplet, *Epiphanie* for cello and orchestra. (Maurice Maréchal, B.B.C. Symphony Orchestra, c. Boulton, Third Programme, 10th June.)
- XI. Poulenc, Cello Sonata. (Fournier, Poulenc, Third Programme, 15th June.)
- XII. Roussel, *Bacchus et Ariadne*, Suite No. 1. (Same concert as X.)
- XIII. Satie, *Prelude de la porte heroique du ciel* (orch. Roland Manuel). (Section of L.S.O., c. Lambert, Third Programme, 14th June.)
- XIV. Satie, "*Socrate*", *Drama Symphonique*. (Megan Foster, Sophie Wyss, section of L.S.O., c. Lambert, Third Programme, 17th June.)
- XV. Rawsthorne, Piano Sonatina. (James Gibb, Wigmore Hall, 8th April.)
- XVI. Laszlo Lajtha, Scherzo and Toccata for Piano. (Kyla Greenbaum, Wigmore Hall, 24th April.)
- XVII. Three works played at the 108th Studio Recital of the "Committee for the Promotion of New Music". (Salle Erard, 7th June.)

OSCAR STRAUS: What a pleasant change to have commercial music with invention instead of anti-commercial without. It must not, however, be supposed that this operetta is new; I had a whistling acquaintance with some of the tunes as a boy in Vienna, though I never heard the Overture and the Intermezzo. In fact I should never have thought that an in itself none too refined tune like "Und dann der Herre Leutnant" (I hopefully quote from childhood memory) would receive such imaginative treatment as in these two pieces, particularly in the second, where its derivatives are charmingly combined with those of another *Schlager*. My father always said there was something in Oscar Straus, but I regarded this *a priori* as a paternal aberration. For as a boy one does not take light music

* Including first public or broadcast performances in England.

seriously, even though it be less childish than Lambert's highly acclaimed, unbearably obvious entertainment. Even its tonal structure is, for the practised listener, throughout predictable, as soon as he realizes that there is going to be nothing but primitive symmetry. If I remember correctly, the *Aubade*, beginning in C major, flirts with, and eventually ends in A minor, while the *Siesta*, starting in A minor, flirts with, and finally ends in C major. Now the jolly *Nocturne* (whose title tries in vain to make the music original) must of course start and end in C major to complete the picture, and, all too consequently, must have a more serious affair with A minor in the middle. But Heaven will forgive Lambert these pieces in view of his fascinating performance in *Gold Coast Customs*. Whether Searle himself will be forgiven is an extremely difficult question. If sincerity counts, yes. For the rest, the four continuous, indeed endless movements seem to me to proceed on a sub-artistic level, translating rather than sublimating a lot of repressed and therefore powerful aggression into music. The work would in fact appear to express the primitive affects whose effects it satirizes; hence the strong impression it left on many. This is subjective criticism. But technical questions, too, remain unsolved, particularly, of course, the problems of melodrama. Admittedly these are formidable, yet as far as the texture is concerned Mr. Searle's approach could definitely have been more cautious. In this company, Mellers' Motets ("a glance at [which] reminds us forcibly of Holst"¹), or what the chorus' distonations allowed us to take in of them, were a welcome representative of culture. The traditional traits of his fifth Cantata, e.g. the solo voice's moving dominant entry (with a touch of minor), sounded brand-new. And our alarm at his early return to, and settlement in the tonic of D minor turned out to be quite unfounded, for not only does he get away with it, but this third and last section, structurally faultless, actually contains the most subtly expressive music. I do not know anything about the composer's development, but I gather that the emotional weight of this work was not altogether to be foreseen. At the same time, and in spite of such things as the touching, doubly thematic use of the side-drum at the soft choral D major end, the scoring (which impressed one of our leading composers most) seemed to me the musically least inevitable aspect of Mellers' Cantata. Seiber's, on the other hand, based on a passage in the penultimate chapter of James Joyce's *Ulysses*, shows the most brilliant scoring throughout, as generally a most assured surmounting of all the technical tasks involved. Whether the whole work is as inspired as proved, upon first acquaintance, certain sections, remains to be heard. As for the remaining choral work on my list, imagine a baby born with a beard. This Mass, that is to say, about which the most laudatory nonsense has been written in *The Times* of 21st January, 1949, is the opposite of Mellers' Cantata, in that Mr. Harrison makes even the new sound old. The degree to which, in particular, the F major *Laudamus te* reverts to the eighteenth century is downright embarrassing, and is made none the more tolerable by the silly setting of "lau—damus", "glo—rificamus", and "be—nedicimus". While the *Gratias agimus tibi* in the same key is unique in its lack of invention, there is some unexpected tonal interest in the *Qui sedes*, whose body is in E flat minor, and which leads unconventionally and thrillingly into the E flat major of the *Quoniam*. Elsewhere, the modulation from G flat to A major in *Kyrie eleison* was about the only event of more than passing interest and I took the liberty of ending the work at the beginning of the *Crucifixus*, i.e. after 50 minutes. The eclecticism of the Strauss Concerto is less irritating, if not more stimulating. The composition is almost as good as an empty epigonic work can be; almost—for the pseudo-emotions of the second movement disturb the unity of emptiness. The last movement is the freshest and most natural. I personally do not see any point in playing about with the past, but if Strauss and his admirers enjoy it, why should we object? There are worse things which pretend to be better, as for instance the Caplet, in whose outer sections there is little reason for the cello, while in the middle part (cadenza) there is little reason for any instrument at all. Poulenc's always tasteful, beautifully sentimental cello Sonata, on the other hand, simple in tonal and thematic structure and lucid in texture, shows the most exceptional cello writing.

¹ Hutchings, A., "Wilfrid Mellers", *Music-Survey*, forthcoming.

Though not easy for the performers, it all flows like oil, and while not everybody's cup of tea, it will only be the snob's cup of syrup. The second movement is partially below the level of the rest, because the transitions are a little forced. The third is, as of old, in the key (E) of the first, but the fourth smoothly turns into A at the reprise and before the return of its slow introduction; it is indeed in A that the Sonata ends. Another work of logical progressive tonality is the Roussel, which Mellers counts among the composer's "most impressive accomplishments".² When in the last section the key of E flat is for the first time reached, neither the succeeding D minor nor the G sharp minor can shake our conviction that we shall end in E flat. If Satie's early, short, and anti-developmental Prelude (which he dedicated to himself) makes one sit up, the much discussed, but so far never heard *Socrate* makes one sit motionless. For this is the only piece of *spiritually hypnotic* music one is likely to come across. Of the two solo piano pieces, the Rawsthorne seems a master's rather than a masterpiece. Mellers has noted the concision of all of Rawsthorne's music, the fact that it is "singularly 'of a piece'".³ Have the composer's admirable tendencies towards terseness reached the danger-point in the Sonatina? Is the material fully allowed to have its say?⁴ If not, this is a piece with a quite un-English fault. What was wrong with the Lajtha I have forgotten, what was right was disappointingly unimpressive. The right and wrong of the rest of Kyla Greenbaum's piano recital, on the other hand, appeared to me to be of great general significance, with which I shall concern myself in an article on "Kyla Greenbaum and the Psychology of the Modern Artist" in the next issue of this journal. Since the "Promotion" recital was not a public one, I do not wish to name the works performed, but I regard it as my duty to record that we were provided with a rare ration of reeking rubbish by composers, and through the promotion of a committee, who could know better.

LONDON PHILHARMONIC ORCHESTRA

UNDER KLEIBER

Albert Hall, 14th April

Freischütz Overture, *Paukenschlag* and *Pathétique* Symphonies

THE Overture was brilliantly conducted. If, for me, the upward leaping minor 6th in the coda's 29th bar fell a little flat, this was only because I could not rid myself of the memory of a strong childhood impression: Furtwängler, upon a spontaneous inspiration, suspending the violins in the jump, the accented f'' being all the more powerful for its retardation. Flugel's⁵ "principle of increase of satisfaction through inhibition" applies here. Also in another kind of delaying action of which Kleiber himself is master. One instance thereof was his intense *tenuto* in the 13th bar of the same coda. In this way he enormously strengthened the transition to the ensuing resumption of the 2nd subject (Agathe's 2nd act aria): the accumulation of tension on the b'' with the subsequent sudden discharge of energy on the g'' was in fact a model of how to make the implicit explicit without exaggerating it. Another instance was the actual *ten.* in (e.g.) bar 2 of the Haydn Andante, where Kleiber obtained almost a legato effect as between the last note of the first phrase and the first (*stacc.*) note of the second. In other words, he let the phrases somewhat overlap, the end of the first phrase receiving a spot of upbeat significance. The increased speed of this movement's first variation was organic. So was the return to the original tempo in the *Minore*, though the stress on the A flat chord—in direct contradiction to the negative accent implied in Haydn's sudden pianissimo—was cheap. In the *Maggiore* we were moved by some beautiful lyricism in fl. and ob., and the slight *accelerando* of bars 127–28 which nevertheless retained the taut rhythm of the halved values in bar 128 was a little masterpiece in itself, as were the flutes' none too short, yet staccato

² Mellers, W., "Albert Roussel and La Musique Française", *Studies in Contemporary Music*, 1947.

³ Mellers, W., "Alan Rawsthorne and the Baroque", *op. cit.*

⁴ Compare here P. Hamburger's review of this work in the current issue of *Music-Survey*.

⁵ Flugel, J. C., *Men and their Motives*, London, 1934.

quavers on the weak beats in the coda. The other movements, however, Kleiber rendered rather in the style of a military band. He senselessly overdid the *sforzatos* on the 1st movement's string syncopations; the point of these accents is simply to stress the point of the syncopations. The succeeding *sempre p* was not heeded at all, nor was the sudden, if subtle sadness in the chromatic descent of bar 89 brought out; there was a sharp edge to each quaver, and the *dim.* was neglected. The finale was too quick, or at any rate it did not succeed at that pace, but became an unrhythmical rush. The last quaver of the bar tended to be too short; so were, in bars 3 and 7 and in each of their recurrences, the first and third quavers. Notes left out may leave little enjoyment; time left out leaves no music. The evening's event was the overpowering Tchaikovsky, though alas! its last bars were least impressive. Instead of the composer's *p > pppp*, we got *mf > p* in the lower basses, whence the plucked B₁'s tore the texture. Besides, the pizzicatos were of course out of tune, and the higher the dynamic level of the distonator as against the noise of the rest of the band, the more disturbing is his offence.

VAN BEINUM'S ST. MATTHEW PASSION

LPO AND LP CHOIR

Arias: Baillie, Raisbeck, Soames, Pizzey

Evangelist: Pears; Jesus: Irwin

Albert Hall, 16th April

OR rather—Pears' *St. Matthew Passion*. For upon his recent, striking vocal improvement, the best evangelist we know gave one of his most assured performances. He made only one false step, *i.e.* the misplaced *espressivo* in "Aber am ersten Tage der süßen Brod". Elsewhere, the limitations imposed by the declamatory character of his part inspired him to the most subtle differentiations in descriptive and dramatic expression. And in the six places where Bach withdraws some or all of these limitations—"und fing an zu trauern und zu zagen", "fiel nieder auf sein Angesicht und betete", "und weinete bitterlich" (the latter uniquely prepared by Mr. Pears' "Und alsbald krähet der Hahn"), "dass sie ihn kreuzigten", "Mein Gott, mein Gott", "der Vorhang im Tempel zerriss in zwei Stück"—Pears seemed to conceive the music, in more than one sense of the word.

Comments on van Beinum's performance must start with a few criticisms of his ideas on the scoring. The choruses of the disciples (Nos. 14, 15) and of the other small groups (Nos. 47, 71, 73) should not be sung by a crowd—Schweitzer is eminently sensible here, except that he puts the realistic reason first and the musical second. Particularly infuriating was the massed singing of No. 47, "Wahrlich du bist auch einer von denen", because except for the first half-bar or so you could not hear anything of the independent flute part. In all the choruses of the people, in point of fact, van Beinum seemed intent upon letting the orchestra fight a losing battle. Neither in No. 45 nor in No. 50 nor in "Sein Blut komme über uns!" could I hear a trace of anything flutelike. In Nos. 54 and 59 I heard the two pitiable flutes as long as the vocal basses were by themselves, *i.e.* for 1½ bars, and in No. 62 as long as the first chorus was by itself, *i.e.* for three quavers. Now this is strictly objective criticism: (a) The markedly individual flute parts in these choruses are of great import and must be heard. (b) I had one of the best possible seats. (c) I have good ears. If ever there was a case for adding, as Schweitzer suggests, *piccolo*, it was in the Albert Hall! Another instance of misinstrumentation was the omission of the apparently authentic¹ celli in No. 33, the resulting sound being downright ridiculous.

As for van Beinum's interpretation itself, the only general protest I have to make is against his unmusical *accelerandos* at the end of the choruses No. 5, No. 59 (both of them), of "Andern hat er geholfen" (two *accelerandos*), of "Halt, lass sehen", as well as the *accelerando* before the fermata in "Sind Blitze, sind Donner in Wolken verschwunden". To the individual pieces:—The opening chorus dragged along, and much of its excitement

¹ Cf. Schweitzer, p. 601 f. of 11th German edition (1935).

was lacking. The tenors' A flat on "Ar[men]" in No. 7 was wonderfully brought out. No. 9's orchestral sighs were not sufficiently phrased. The tempo of No. 10 appeared exceptionally sensitive, *i.e.* not too slow, but again one could not feel all the orchestral sighs, well phrased though the syncopations were. No. 12 once more lacked its sighs; here, in fact, the phrasing was never good and sometimes absurd: the 6th bar's E sharp received a stronger accent than the succeeding F sharp, and about the same thing had happened in the preceding bar. Miss Baillie, moreover, enhanced the orchestra's misinterpretation by a variety of retarding devices. Jesus at the last supper was too slow, and little emerged of the sublime majesty of, in particular, the basses, though at the victorious end of the arioso van Beinum's rendering did become less flabby. The phrasing of No. 18's orchestral part was exactly wrong, with the accents always on the beats instead of on the triplets between, and the harpsichord's chordal stresses supporting the misconception. The deep joy of "Ich will dir mein Herze schenken", on the other hand, was realized with unusual understanding. The bass steps in the recitative No. 20 were a sorry sound. The other semiquaver steps of this section, 3 bars before the end, came out better—chiefly, though, because they happen to be upstairs, in the violins. The flute phrasing of No. 25 was half-hearted in its far too timid emphasis on the second and fourth beats. The bass semiquavers rolled along quite mechanically, and their division into *pizzicato*, *spiccato* and *détaché* was about the worst thing you could think of, at any rate in the Albert Hall. Nor did the choir betray in this piece any sign of emotional upset, though in No. 26 they kept the tempo extraordinarily well; here it was the oboe which marred appreciation by its illogical phrasing, including an accent on—of all places!—the first bar's 7th quaver. But with his beautiful diminuendo in the penultimate choral section as well as in the altogether moving execution of the last choral part of this number, van Beinum certainly made us know what he was rightly imagining. The recitative No. 28 disappointed because the exceptional bar 4, wherein the semiquavers for once rise, was played away rather than up to itself, and the succeeding bass aria was the bore it always is in average performances. The violins rendered bar 10 of the recitative No. 32 with absurd discretion, while what was left (without cello) of the orchestral part of "So ist mein Jesus nun gefangen" was flaccid and did not encourage the singers to go ahead as they should. In "Sind Blitze" there was not enough of the instrumental and vocal bass semiquavers, and while the organ's restraint in "Eröffne den Abgrund" was laudable, the further lack of semiquavers was not. At the beginning of No. 35 I thought that van Beinum had wisely chosen a quicker tempo in view of the chorale figurations, but when he came to them he started to drag. The end of the piece did not convince, either; the abrupt ritardando in the penultimate bar popped up from nowhere in particular. The phraseological approach to No. 36 was sensible, if not sufficiently audible, but the choir's phlegmatic utterances enraged me. No. 41's fine cello solo was a pleasant surprise, as was van Beinum's stern hand when the tempo threatened to run away in bars 17-18. The orchestral semiquavers in the recitative No. 42 were not bad, but bass there was none. No. 43 was highly impressive. "The" (*i.e.* the first) violin solo, besides being accent-laden and greasy, offered such barbarisms as the misplaced stress on the semiquaver succeeding the two demisemiquavers (not intended, to be sure, but simply the result of using the whole bow for the three notes), or the heavy semiquaver d''' in bar 29, not to speak of the earthquake vibrato. The emotionally easier second violin solo, on the other hand (played by the leader of the Second Orchestra), though nervous, was well thought out, and the *non legato* of the 3 semiquavers' upbeat in bar 4 was as unconventional as it was pleasing. That the whole thing was not quite fresh enough was van Beinum's fault. And had he not earlier on paid too little attention to Schweitzer, we might have thought in No. 57 that he was heeding him too much, for there was more than enough of Schweitzer's "Ruhestation". In the arioso of No. 61, too, it might have seemed as if van Beinum was thinking of Schweitzer's orchestral "Geisselhiebe", for the dotted notes were unbearably short. Mind the music and the symbolism will look after itself. The soporific that was the tempo of the succeeding aria became a narcotic under Miss Raisbeck's unsolicited direction. In No. 65 the flutes were not together, so that they did not completely succeed in their wrong intentions of stressing

the first semiquaver instead of the quaver. No. 66 was a miracle in that it was wearisome without being heavy enough. In the first chorus of No. 67, there should have been more of the all-important bass figure of bars 8 ff. The ritardandos before bar 11 of the 2nd chorus proved at least acceptable. No. 70 was van Beinum's best number. That is to say, he fearlessly acknowledged the unexpected change of mood after the heart-breaking "Ach Golgatha" (No. 69). In No. 75 there were phrase-breaking accents on the first semiquaver of each pair and also on the single semiquavers, which were too long. As far as the ritornello was concerned, the aria sounded like a piece of programme music on "The Busybody". The sudden significance given to the last, cadential phrase of No. 77 was idiotic, and the final chorus could have done with more orchestral bass and spiritual peace. As regards the general impression of van Beinum's representation, I had none.

H. K.

VICTOR DE SABATA

19TH MAY

Overture, <i>La Gazza Ladra</i>	Rossini
Symphony No. 1 in C minor	Brahms
<i>Rapsodie Espagnole</i>	Ravel
<i>Pezzo Concertante</i>	Ghedini
<i>Hungarian March</i>	Berlioz
<i>Bolevo</i>	Ravel

26TH MAY

<i>Missa Solemnis</i> in D, Op. 123	Beethoven
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Sylvia Fisher, Nancy Evans, William Herbert, William Parsons

London Philharmonic Choir

2ND JUNE

Requiem Mass	Verdi
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Joan Hammond, Constance Shacklock, Richard Lewis, Gianpiero Malaspina

London Philharmonic Choir

ALBERT HALL

A COLLEAGUE has suggested that a legend is arising round Victor de Sabata, similar to the Toscanini myth of pre-war days. If such a legend does arise it will be no myth, but, in the interest of both sense and sensibility, far better not. Sabata has two attributes which exert their unfailing effect on the unperceptive and unthinking concert-goer: a brilliant and at times flashy technique with elements in common with both the circus and the boxing ring, and a consistent disdain for the "score" as a prop for failing memory,—Sabata's memory does not fail. Such are the trappings of genius; they are not genius itself.

The average modern performance of *Bolevo* usually portrays a dreary little tune around which there accumulates in the course of some fifteen minutes a more or less untidy fungoid excrescence of orchestral elaboration, the whole disintegrating at the last in a brief blazing riot from the orchestral kitchen. Not so with Victor de Sabata, who exerts so fine a control over the development of Ravel's orchestral fungus that what had once seemed a mere tawdry exhibition piece emerges as a near-masterpiece.

The same composer's *Rapsodie Espagnole* emerged as an absolute masterpiece. In fact at his first concert Sabata's mercurial interpretive technique struck an unmistakable affinity with Ravel's equally mercurial creative imagination: a magical compound which overshadowed, but did not eclipse all else in the programme.

Ghedini's *Pezzo Concertante* for two violins (David Wise and Albert Chasey), viola (Frederick Riddle) and orchestra proved an eloquent testimonial to its composer's imaginative gifts, being played with a meticulous care which, however, failed to conceal a certain coarseness of idiom in climactic passages.

Brahms' C minor Symphony lends itself to many different treatments, even Sabata's, though, as another conductor is reported to have said at the end of this performance, "I make it other". Apart from the matter of tempo in the finale, where the evidence runs against his reading, we are not prepared to condemn Sabata's interpretation which justified itself by establishing its own inner logic as it proceeded; this was by no means an Englishman's Brahms, nor yet a German's, but we should be careful not to believe that the attitude we have long adopted is necessarily the only right one.

This first concert, however, was a thing of shreds and patches: not uninteresting in its desultory, rambling fashion, but with little claim to co-ordinated programme-building. Any tolerably competent time-beater could have got through these items before the kind of present day audience that has no violent objection to being bored, but the time-beating brigade are all at sea with Beethoven's Mass in D, always have been and always will be. Nor have English conductors, apart from Beecham, been particularly successful with Verdi's Requiem.

Genius is not merely an infinite capacity for taking pains; much though this aspect was in evidence on both occasions. Photographic memory, histrionic ability, a gift for blending and balancing musical sounds, the power to achieve the full confidence of singers and players; all these, too, would go for very little without that individual quality of superior insight into the composer's mental processes which distinguishes Sabata from all but the very greatest of his colleagues. We have seen and heard evidence of this before, in a performance of the *Enigma* variations: these two choral concerts emphasized past experience on a larger scale.

Choir and orchestra distinguished themselves in both works, while the soloists in the Verdi were more effective, both individually and collectively, than those in the Beethoven.

G. N. S.

MISSA SOLEMNIS

ALBERT HALL, 26TH APRIL

Goldsmiths' Choral Union and Symphony Orchestra under Haggis. Finneberg; ?, not Desmond, as programme and notices said; Herbert; Parsons.

LONDON's Festival of Blasphemies in full if unrhythmical swing. After Boult's travesty of the B minor Mass we now got what according to the programme was the *Missa Solemnis*, in which undistinguishable noises alternated with, unfortunately, distinguishable ones. The chorus, opining that Beethoven's emotional range was limited, volunteered various spots of humour, such as the sopranos' top B flats in *Et vitam venturi saeculi*, and for the same reason Mr. McCallum contributed an eminently meaty violin solo. While, it is true, the soloists had some bright periods, in some of which they were well on the way to being in tune, we should be thankful to anyone wiser than ourselves if he could enlighten us as to what exactly is the point of this sort of thing, except to elicit a favourable criticism in the *Daily Telegraph*. *Dona nobis pacem* indeed.

THE NATIONAL YOUTH ORCHESTRA OF GREAT BRITAIN

CENTRAL HALL, 29TH APRIL

Under Jacques, with Robin Wood

Oberon Overture; Beethoven: G major Concerto; Elgar: 2nd *Wand of Youth* Suite; Dvořák: 4th Symphony

FOUNDED in 1947 by Ruth Railton, this orchestra consists of players from all over the country between the ages of 13 and 18 who meet thrice a year during school holidays for individual and sectional work under notable teachers and for full rehearsals. There are, moreover, classes in rudiments, harmony, composition, and conducting, and the name of a chamber music teacher also appears on the programme. The training sessions are immediately succeeded by concerts, of which the present was the fourth, and the first in London.

It was a refreshing experience to hear an orchestra with too little routine instead of too much routinism, too much nervousness instead of too little excitement, and more musical enthusiasm than technical ability rather than neither the one nor the other. This is not to deny the considerable technical accomplishment of some of the players (e.g. the leader, Mr. John Ludlow of Birmingham) which, however, is not allowed to shine as it should because some others, not yet fit to be members of this promising body, pull the level of performance down. Thus, whenever the first violins busied themselves on the E string, the total result was pitiable. At the same time there were stretches where the performance, especially in the celli, was better than any you are nowadays likely to hear in London, while at its worst it was little worse than the standard renderings of . . . (take your choice, nowise Hobson's). The execution improved as nervousness decreased: the Dvořák was best. But I must add that from where I sat it was difficult to guess the balance. The soloist's interpretation was commendable, though not yet much more than a pupil's effort. He might, however, have played Beethoven's cadenzas. And Dr. Jacques should have noticed (*i.e.* heard if not seen) that the leader's E string broke in the Adagio of the Dvořák, and should have allowed for proper adjustment of the new string before the third movement. As it was, Mr. Ludlow had to content himself with misplacedly discreet and hasty *pizz.* tuning.

CONCERTGEBOUW ORCHESTRA

VAN BEINUM

Albert Hall, 23rd May

Euryanthe Overture, Schubert No. 9, *Firebird* Suite, *Carnaval Romain* Overture

A VERY good, though over-praised orchestra under a very musical and conscientious, if not always truly symphonic conductor. The C major Symphony, at any rate, fell to pieces, many of them, to be sure, admirably shaped in themselves. So were even one or two crucial transitions. Indeed, van Beinum's best was a silent bar, one of the Symphony's three G.P.'s, *i.e.* that in the Andante. He markedly prolonged the rest, until it was exactly long enough to make his succeeding slower pace plausible, in fact inevitable. On the other hand, he is among the many who have not given much thought to the problem of *subito piano* in the Albert Hall. One of the points about a sudden *p* is that you should hear it. Most conductors at the Albert Hall, however, allow it to be swallowed up by the preceding *f(f)*. And Albert Hall apart, interpreters are mistaken if they think that the purpose of a sudden *piano* is attained by, simply, a sudden *piano*. No, let the *piano* follow as quickly as is possible for the ear to take it in, and the phrase to take it. Everything, even suddenness, must take its time; indeed "*subito*" is by no means only a temporal notion, and sudden softness lives on the absence of dynamic intermediation.

There were some other local flaws which van Beinum could have prevented, such as the irritating staccato semiquaver instead of a staccato quaver in bars 313 and 315 of the Symphony's Andante, or the, yet more annoying, complete absence of *pianissimo* in the 2nd violins in the same movement's bars 183 *ff*.

H. K.

RUDOLF SERKIN

BEETHOVEN, OP. 13, 77, 78, 109, 57

Covent Garden Opera House, 22nd May

AFTER the first movement of the Sonata *pathétique* which started the programme, one knew that here was that *rara avis* amongst pianists: a Beethoven-player on a par with Schnabel. Thinking of the difference between the actor who plays himself (or one of his selves) in all rôles, and the other who loses himself in all rôles, one might say that Schnabel is the imperious architect of Beethoven's castles whereas Serkin forms these sonatas unconsciously, as wind and water form a classical landscape. Schnabel not only is, but plays like the doyen of all pianists. Serkin, the younger man, seems unaware that there

are other conceptions, or indeed other pianists. Both of them would probably protest that they are only playing what is written—a useful self-deception of great performers. Never yet has the truism that personality in a performer begins with meticulous regard for the composer's intentions been proved so convincingly as by Serkin. As he surrenders to his composer, his lyrical passages grow unequalled in natural flow. A movement like the first of op. 78, seen as Serkin sees it, may have prompted Schumann to speak of "wandering through the verdant bowers of Beethoven's piano-sonatas". But in his rendering of the *Appassionata* Serkin showed that he can just as naturally fulfil the demands of the big, dramatic canvas. The Schnabel-Serkin comparison here reduces itself to the philosophical antithesis between Spirit and Nature: Schnabel plays the *Appassionata* like an anguished emperor, Serkin like an enraged Oberon. Seeing Serkin sitting on the vast, dimly lit Covent Garden stage, tossing the billows of the *Appassionata* across the empty orchestra-pit into the shamefully small, almost overawed audience, I was reminded of Rilke's poetical tableau of the deaf Beethoven playing his *Hammerklavier* on a hill in the African desert, overheard only by the roaming bedouin, and the lion who, becoming conscious of his own strength, encircles the hill by night. P. H.

BRAHMS B FLAT CONCERTO

WITH PHILHARMONIA ORCHESTRA, C. ISSAY DOBROWEN

Albert Hall, 29th May

A SINGLE lapse into artificiality apart, this was the best performance of the Concerto we have ever heard; P.H.'s "natural" is indeed the word. At the same time, Mr. Serkin indulged in the most affected bodily enactments it was ever our task to ignore.

THE BUSCH QUARTET

HAYDN MOZART BEETHOVEN

Chelsea Town Hall, May

I ATTENDED the first two of the four recitals which comprised the four last quartets of the classical masters. As good a programme as any, according to a leading critic. A bad plan, I suggest, for it necessitated the performance of the only work of the grown-up Haydn which is not fit for performance, *i.e.* the last Quartet, Op. 103. But I should like to point out that the second movement (which the Buschs did not play) is the first Minuet not to be in the tonic. Unfortunately Haydn's intentions cannot be fully appreciated because the Quartet is incomplete and because the two complete movements are not finished.

Another wrong choice was that of Haydn, Op. 76, No. 6, as first quartet. The Buschs should know that sound is not their strength, and hence should not start off in E flat. But then, as far as Haydn and Mozart are concerned, they know absolutely nothing. It is, quite seriously, a mystery to me how a musician of Busch's stature can play these composers without realizing that he does not understand them. To give one example of his blatant misinterpretations, the trio of the just-mentioned E flat Quartet was played with a heavy accent on each minim. While the tune derives from bars 5-6 of the minuet, in which the minims *are* accented, one of the trio's main points is its contrast to the minuet, expressed in the spacious, unburdened, dreamy, yet directive flow of the E flat major scale whose accents must be imperceptible and imperceptibly shaded. Once the scale becomes aimless the whole thing seems baseless. Busch's leadership gone, the others' limitations shone. Bruno Straumann (2nd violin) appeared unhappy that he could not play Paganini, while Hugo Gottesmann (viola) did not seem to care much whether or what he played. Hermann Busch's uncertain intonation was of course most devastating in Haydn's basses. Not that there was any merit in the rendering of Mozart K.575 and 589. Indeed it was tragicomic to hear, for once, Einstein's *Authentic Edition* being heeded, in performances in which, for once, truth to the letter did not matter.

But Busch's Beethoven! Here was musical life. Only very few things were downright wrong, such as the jumpy semiquaver in the opening motif of the *Alla danza tedesca*. Tragicomic, once more, to witness how Beethoven's endeavours to tell the performer precisely what to do results, again and again, in the performer's doing precisely the wrong thing. What Beethoven tried to indicate here was that the motif should float to and (especially) fro, not that it should vanish like a snapped elastic. All the same, the B flat major compelled attention throughout and the C sharp minor through and through. The mishaps in the latter's *Presto* (no need to say where!) did not matter at all, for once a Beethoven performance lives it is difficult to kill it, and while the viola in No. 6 was unworthy in its earthly expression, Busch's entry with the theme meant sublimity. If performances of late Beethoven always leave some dissatisfaction, this is his awing fault. There is only one way of playing these works, and that one is wrong. Or it comes out wrong, anyway. For none of us is yet near enough to where Beethoven was then to make what he thought, real.

H. K.

THE PHILADELPHIA ORCHESTRA

THE Editor regrets that, in view of Mr. Harold Fielding's sustained refusal to provide press facilities, no account of this orchestra's London concerts can appear in these pages.

Opera

THE CITY OPERA CLUB: "TITUS"

GUILDHALL SCHOOL OF MUSIC, 29TH APRIL

IN his letter accompanying the press tickets, the doubtless able conductor of this show wrote that he would be grateful if I "let all [my] musical friends know about it, as we depend entirely on ticket sales for our existence". I trust that certain irresponsible notices in responsible newspapers, and the ensuing sales, have evoked Mr. Dempster's gratitude. As long, however, as the City Opera Club can drag the rarely staged work of a mature master through the mud of an unmentionably inept rendering in which hardly a single orchestral bar is as much as bearable, I and the musical among my friends wish it a speedy death. "The Club acknowledges with gratitude the support given by the Arts Council of Great Britain." Instead of encouraging everybody to do everything, one ought to teach Everybody what to leave alone.

H. K.

COVENT GARDEN: *Rigoletto*, 4th May, 1949

ANY disappointment at Erna Berger's indisposition was dispelled by Elisabeth Schwarzkopf's Gilda, which was sung with taste and style and a real sense of tradition. That having been said, the remainder of the production was lamentable. Mr. Tom Williams, as Rigoletto, had obviously thought out his cloak-and-dagger part with considerable care, but his appearance was ludicrous. For the whole evening he roamed the stage like a dyspeptic Caliban: not once did a smile pass across his ravaged face. It made one wonder how on earth he ever got a job as Court Jester. A visitor from the Metropolitan, Mr. Eugene Conley, made his debut as the Duke of Mantua. Throughout the first act he was almost inaudible, but he remedied this deficiency with a vengeance during the last. His final exit was the most excruciatingly and persistently flat one (musically) that I have had the misfortune to hear. But the real heroes of the evening were the trombones, who sounded as if they had been recently recruited from the Salvation Army. Perhaps one day Jericho's fate will be repeated: certainly enough sins are committed at Covent Garden to justify such an act of retribution.

D. M.

La Bohème, 7th May

c. Braithwaite

NONE of the people mentioned in Meyerstein's review of the Covent Garden *Bohème* in this journal's February issue (p. 48f.) took part in this performance, but the only man I should have wished back urgently was the conductor, Peter Gellhorn. He would, I am sure, have made it clear that a distinct Puccini *rall.* is followed by a distinct *a tempo*, or that an accent is by no means identical with a staccato dot, or that at the *a tempo* end of Musetta's waltz there is an all-important *p* (or was Miss Turner's offence unrehearsed?). While I gather that the new American acquisition, Mr. Eugene Conley, was bitterly disappointing upon his Covent Garden début, he here emerged as one of our best Rudolphys, and if the final "*Mimi*", complete with sobs, is not easily thinkable without Gigli, this is not Mr. Conley's fault. Nor would the modest volume of his voice have mattered if Mr. Braithwaite had heeded it. Miss Schwarzkopf, too, is at the moment our best possible Mimi, and if she had sung *Fingevo di dormire* not with a realistically heavy breath (though less so than other Mimis), but in a beautifully even *legato*, leaving the orchestral crotchets to speak for themselves, she would have yet more nearly approached perfection. Altogether an unusually impressive evening, not seriously marred by Peter Brook's fussy "revised production", in which people kept spitting, splashing, and throwing various substances about and beside each other. But then he had less opportunity to kill the music than in *Figaro*. The audience, on the other hand, availed themselves of their big chance, and clapped the concluding *Grave* away. Our audiences are always better behaved than the Italians', except when it matters.

La Traviata, 10th May

WHILE Sharp's remarks about Schwarzkopf's first act (this journal, May, 1948, p. 115) remain true, her nervousness therein has meanwhile decreased; later in the performance, indeed, she approached the most ardent art. Schock improved likewise during the evening; at his best he is very good, musically, vocally, and histrionically. The man in front of me conducted too much and Mr. Reginald Goodall too little.

Carmen, 24th May

Winifred Heidt (U.S.A.)

SHE hit everyone, though not always above the belt. Voice, diction, acting and appearance quite exceptional; top and bottom notes equipollent. That bottom-*b* upbeat in the last "Tra la la la la . . ." of the song that is embedded in the recitative of Zuniga's unsuccessful questioning (not to speak of the *b-a#-b* at the end of this period) made me wait for the long *b* in the *Séguedille*, for the *c'* on "[*Toujours la mort*]" . . . But what about Miss Heidt's musicianship? It would be unfair to say that she hadn't any, and misleading to say that she had. The truth is that her musicality, while marked, appears somewhat primitive. This affects even the quality of her voice which, despite its beauty, smells of the jungle. There is, moreover, a weakly sublimated, strong sexiness about her music which is not yet art. Some think it is just this quality that is needed for the gipsy girl. Be that as it may, Miss Heidt's musical self needs self-education. To begin with, one would advise her not to listen to what the words entice her to do with a musical phrase, but to what the music requires her to do with the words.

H. K.

NEW LONDON OPERA COMPANY

Falstaff, 14th May; *Tosca*, 23rd May; *Barber of Seville*, 24th May; *Rigoletto*, 6th June; *Don Pasquale*, 7th June.

JAY POMEROY'S courageous decision to revive the New London Opera Company for a six-week season at the Stoll Theatre may be said to have justified itself artistically, though no performance which we saw drew anything approaching a full house and the commercial result of the venture cannot hold out much promise for future experiment.

The outstanding feature has been the orchestral playing in *Tosca*, and to a lesser extent in *Falstaff*, both under the direction of Clemens Krauss. Such a standard has not been approached by any English opera orchestra for ten years or longer. In *The Barber* and *Don Pasquale* the playing was adequate but not exceptional, whereas in *Rigoletto* it was thoroughly bad, lacking entirely those qualities of precision and gusto that are so necessary to the success of Verdi's melodrama. All these performances were directed by Alberto Erede. Private jokes among the horn players and fidgety behaviour among woodwind and brass generally, on 6th June, were extreme indications of a laxity of orchestral discipline very prevalent in England to-day. The situation, in which a strong, arrogant and uneducated Musicians' Union consistently rides roughshod over all artistic considerations, is unsupportable, and, indeed, could only arise in a sick and sorry society drearily trampling down all the higher aspects of civilized life in the interests of more and more creature comforts for the mob. The Musicians' Union devotes so much time to raising the floor of the profession that it may not have noticed the rate of subsidence of the ceiling: if the two are to be permitted, let alone encouraged to meet, that will be the end in this country of what is sometimes called "art music"; a prospect which only a moron could view with complacency.

The various productions were all handicapped by the transfer of small scenery, designed for the Cambridge Theatre, to the much larger stage of the Stoll; and also by very unenterprising stage lighting, by no means to be compared with the best results obtained at the Cambridge. Only the first of these was inevitable. What had been done with Professor Ebert's lighting plot for *Rigoletto*? What we were given was certainly no improvement.

Considered as a whole the finest performance was that of *The Barber*, because there was no real weakness among the principal members of the cast:—although Ian Wallace could not quite command the voice or the grotesquerie of behaviour to portray Dr. Bartolo on the same scale as Mongelli's Basilio (quite impossible!), Silveri's Figaro or Infantino's Almaviva. Graciela Rivera made an enchanting Rosina and Victoria Palombini a fully adequate Bertha.

Second in order of merit was the performance of *Tosca*. The obvious weakness here, of course, was that Mariano Stabile cannot sing Scarpia. We do not know whether he ever could, but to study the various ways and means by which he contrives to camouflage his lack of voice is an education in itself, and liable at times to distract one's attention from the superb character-study he gives of the chief of police. Sacchi and Salvarezza were enthusiastically vocal, even at times noisier than Puccini wanted, as *Tosca* and Cavaradossi, and Clemens Krauss demonstrated to the full the dramatic consistency and emotional power of the score.

Don Pasquale suffered similarly in that Daria Bayan could not do full justice to Norina's music, at any rate in the Stoll Theatre. Martin Lawrence's portrayal of Pasquale improves every year, Stabile gave his well known study of Malatesta and Bruno Landi did all that can be done with the part of Ernesto.

Falstaff was not a success on the opening night, despite the brilliance of the orchestra, for much of the singing was lamentable. John Lanigan (Fenton) and Stanley Pope (Ford) were the principal offenders, though Daria Bayan was also very weak as Nanetta and Stabile's *Falstaff*, like his Scarpia, can almost be described as a confidence trick.

Finally *Rigoletto*. This has long been one of the major successes of the company and we expected something vastly better than the fiasco of 6th June, which was relieved only by Silveri's fine portrayal of Rigoletto, Mongelli's apposite and stylish Sparafucile and Victoria Palombini's Maddalena. Stanley Pope had neither the voice nor the personality for Monterone and Graciela Rivera was less confident and therefore less convincing as Gilda than she had been as Rosina. The principal culprit, however, apart from the orchestra, was Luigi Infantino who indulged in the common habit of holding and bawling top notes, though we cannot conceive how Erede came to let him. The most vulgar example of all came at the end of the last act after the Duke had left the stage singing

"La Donna e mobile": here Infantino, quite obviously, returned down stage as far as he could (while remaining out of sight) to deliver his final screech!

Although there has been much to criticize, this revival, as we have said, has been well worth while; partly for the performances given with Clemens Krauss and also for some very fine acting and singing, in particular from Silveri and Mongelli, and the usual accomplished acting from Stabile. A six-week season imposes a number of short-term problems which either do not arise or can be circumvented in a full repertory programme, and many of the shortcomings evident at the Stoll could and would have been smoothed over in course of time. This was in fact a promising resumption of a very creditable enterprise which we hope it may prove possible to re-establish on a permanent basis.

La Bohème was also played, but we were unable to see it.

G. N. S.

THE "RING" AND "TRISTAN" AT COVENT GARDEN

MAY-JUNE

ERNEST NEWMAN posed the question whether these performances would have been good enough for Wagner. Quite a number of listeners seemed to ask themselves whether Wagner was good enough for them, the reply being in the negative. "Not my cup of tea" commented one professional observer on *Tristan*. "I prefer Mozart" was the reaction of an official of a prominent musical society to her first hearing of the *Walküre*. If she had said, "I prefer the *Merry Widow*", there would at least have been a point in it, as a friend of mine remarked. What an age which hides its fear of genius behind anti-romanticism or "objective criticism"! Whose humility towards the mediocre knows no bounds, while it vents its arrogance on the great original!

There was one perfect performance, Peter Klein's Mime. Hotter (Wotan, Gunther) would have been a close second, but for his by now well-known vocal maladies. While Flagstad's voice and technique are of course unique, her musical insight did not match Hotter's. Svanholm is the best Siegfried and the best Tristan, though not the best Loge we can get. Doris Doree (Sieglinde, Gutrune) has surprisingly improved since last year. The orchestra has not. Rankl's interpretations, though largely competent and occasionally more than that, were not altogether beyond reproach. Things like the enormous extension of the quaver rest after Loge's "... nun sorgt wie ihr das wahr!", or, in the *Götterdämmerung*, the lack of dynamics in the Prelude's interlude, upset the music, if not the stalls. Nor was there the least excuse for drowning—among innumerable other instances—Wotan's "In des Morgens Scheine muthig erschimmernd lag sie herrenlos hehr verlockend vor mir" (*Rheingold*), or of Gunther's "Gepriesen sei Grimhild, die uns den Bruder gab!" In fact not even Flagstad's *Liebestod* was audible throughout. To criticize the intonation in detail would mean to fill this issue. But however much expectedly bad, there was an unexpected lot to be enjoyed, particularly in the *Walküre* and *Tristan*, which the orchestra knew well, and in the *Götterdämmerung*, which they did not. Some of the singers, however, communicated with one another in a secret language which, as my British-born friends informed me, was my mother tongue. I understood less of it than of Charlie Chaplin's speech in *The Great Dictator*, where I could at least make out the words "Wiener Schnitzel". No prize is offered for the best approximate translation into German of the words "Gerstik gletter". Solution in the next issue. The more obvious defects in Schramm's production have already been pointed out by others, and Newman has drawn attention to the wrong curtains in *Rheingold*. At the beginning of the *Götterdämmerung*'s first scene, Gutrune wrongly stood in the foreground with her back to the audience, while Siegfried's "Nur wer durch das Feuer bricht?" did not betray "heftigste Anstrengung, um eine Erinnerung festzuhalten". And shortly afterwards, Gutrune did not enter *just as* Siegfried pushed off the boat, but markedly later. When Wagner wrote that Hunding should order Sieglind by a commanding gesture to leave the room he did not imply that Hunding might use the orchestral *staccatos* as accompaniment for a repeated gymnastic exercise, nor, after Wotan's "Diess sei der Walküre Werk", when he "rushes away and disappears quickly L. in the mountains", need he for that purpose change into a butterfly.

On the other hand it was understandable that Isolde amused herself by playing Blind Man's Buff at the end of Act II, since Marke at this juncture spent quite a time enquiring of the audience why they had betrayed him. Nevertheless, the season was worth the attention of those who were worth the season.

H. K.

PELLÉAS ET MÉLISANDE

Covent Garden, 16th June

THE play of Maeterlinck on which Debussy's opera is based is related far less to the Arthurian cycle than is commonly supposed. The cadences and crepuscular mystery of its prose hark back to the Ossianic poems of James Macpherson, while the scene in which Golaud drags his wife up and down by her long hair is boldly lifted from Soranzo's treatment of *his* wife, whom he suspects to have a lover, in John Ford's *'Tis Pity she's a Whore*, of which Maeterlinck made an adaptation, *Annabella*. Whether Debussy was or was not aware of these *rapprochements* is not to the point, they are inherent in his libretto; and, although Arkel is king of the suspiciously teutonic-sounding Allemonde, and although we cannot witness the fatal wounding of Pelléas by Golaud without a vision of Tristan's by Melot, with King Mark and Isolde standing by, the Frenchman's protest against Wagnerism stands firm even despite the thirteen *leitmotiven* that Maurice Emmanuel has found in his score. Besides, Pelléas and Mélisande are innocent, if wilful fibbing children, and the climax of the piece is less death or fatalism than the birth of an innocent and lawfully begotten child. Unless the note of childlike innocence and childlike terror be maintained throughout the action, this opera loses its meaning, as well as the humanity in virtue of which it stands morally above Wagner's work. For Tristan and Isolde are not children at all and have some claim to be regarded as pathological specimens of humanity since for two-thirds of their stage lives they are under the influence of a drug. It is a pity therefore that Debussy was compelled to cut out the scene with Yniold and the Sheep, emphasizing, as it does, this theme of innocence. Any performance, in short, that concerns itself merely with musical impressionism and not with the wayward simplicity of children will tend to rob *Pelléas et Mélisande* of its veritable crown. Its atmosphere may be twilight, but it is *clean*. The Opéra-Comique cast seemed in no danger of not bringing out this point. M. Roger Desormière's conducting was masterly and the Covent Garden Orchestra maintained the necessary balance, even if the violins at times achieved quietness without sonority. The Mélisande of Irène Joachim did not vocalize timidity quite loud enough; she was not equal to Jacques Jansen's Pelléas who was *just* right; but her achievement in the scene by the well, where she gave her playfulness full scope, was notable. Pierre Froumenty's Arkel and Solange Michel's Geneviève invested those parts, especially in Act I, with a Moussorgsky-like intensity, while preserving the legendary atmosphere. H. B. Etcheverry's Golaud missed nothing, a fine angry sonorous rendering. The high spot of the performance, to this critic, was his scene with Yniold (Jacqueline Cellier). Here the note of childhood is heart-piercing. The scene stands alone and can be compared with Hubert's dialogue with Arthur in *King John*. It made the scene where Mélisande lets down her hair from the window positively Pre-Raphaelitish by comparison. Jean Vieuille's Doctor was priestlike in sincerity. A word must be added in praise of Mme Valentine Hugo's exquisite scenery and costumes.

E. H. W. M.

Film Music

NINE SWISS SHORTS

With reference to Wilfrid Mellers' section on film music in "Eric Satie and the 'Problem' of Contemporary Music".¹

ANGLO-CONTINENTAL and French film music apart, our knowledge of Continental scores is not overwhelming. I know nine Swiss short films, one cartoon and eight documentary *Kulturfilme*. Rather few, relatively many.

One of the chief advantages in cartoon music is the absence of one of the chief disadvantages in ordinary film music. The latter, that is to say, is hardly ever "pre-scored". ("Pre-scored" does not, of course, mean "pre-scored", which indeed does not mean anything at all, but "pre-composed".) As a matter of fact the only feature film score I know which was partially composed in advance of the picture was William Alwyn's *Odd Man Out*. Now in the Swiss cartoon *King Coal*, the anonymous composer is even more successful than his freedom from film music's temporal, and hence formal restrictions obliges him to be. The general excellence of the score and of the visual-aural integration, and in particular a quite exceptionally good G minor march song, make this cartoon one of the best I have ever seen. Mellers is doubtless right that "the enormous vogue of the film cartoon intimates that there are possibilities for the cinema in an extremely stylized sort of comic opera in which the characters are treated as depersonalized puppets".

The musical significance of the documentary film is ambivalent. On the one hand, you can get away with anything on many a documentary's sound track because interest often centres so much on the screen, and because the frequent absence or latency of the emotional element makes even sophisticated spectators, let alone the film director, indifferent to musical happenings. Thus part of the documentary field is of great importance for the student of musicopathology, who will observe that it is possible for a valuable documentary series like *This Modern Age* to indulge in the most hair-raising drenching of the sound track. On the other hand it is the very fact that dialogue and other noises are often absent from the documentary's track which offers the gifted composer many an opportunity to give the artist's facet of fact. Of the eight Swiss documentaries I have recently seen at private viewings, four—*Alpine Control*, *Flying Tide*, *Sun Ski-ing*, and *Swiss Musical Boxes*—do not use original music at all, and the first three sound tracks avail themselves of the notorious stratagem of hiding behind music from the concert hall, as if a picture had ever been uplifted by the music it degrades. Particularly perturbing is the *Egmont Overture*'s accompanying *Alpine Control*, chiefly because Beethoven was not much concerned with the training of Swiss mountain rangers, but also because the 2nd subject is reached by way of the noise of an avalanche, and the recapitulation by way of a cut. It must, however, be realized that Swiss documentaries are rarely sponsored, and since, moreover, the revenue from distribution is extremely limited,² there was not perhaps sufficient money for providing all the present films with original music. At the same time it is regrettable that *Alpine Control* and *Sun Ski-ing*, the latter completely free from realistic sound and both of them speech-less, had to be condemned to concert music, for these tracks could have contained well-developed scores. Mellers is wrong when he implies that where film-musical accompaniment is continuous, "any of the recognized musical forms [are] . . . impracticable". Much depends on the length of the film, on its character, on the length of the component film sequences, and on their relation to one another. When the classical German (silent) film *Metropolis* was recently revived, two interludes from *Grimes* ("Storm" and "Moonlight") and the first movement from Stravinsky's *Symphony in three movements* were included in the recorded accompaniment. After I had overcome my initial shock I realized that of all bad choices these were among

¹ *Music and Letters*, 1942. Re-published in *Studies in Contemporary Music*, 1947.

² Cf. Wright, B., "Switzerland", in *Documentary* 48, 1948.

the best, because the *structure* of the movements adapted itself surprisingly well to the film sequences in which they were used. In other words, a good composer could have written fitting pieces for this film if not in a recognized, at any rate in a perfectly recognizable form. I even deny what Mellers calls the silent film's "necessity for continuous musical accompaniment"; in a long film, whether a silent picture or a more or less soundless documentary, I should advocate carefully formed movements interspaced by carefully placed silences. Silent happenings may be unusual; so is art.

Swiss Musical Boxes is necessarily the most unmusical film of the whole lot in that it proffers what is described as an Authentic Music Score, *i.e.* the maddening sound of musical boxes, even in places where the automatons displayed on the screen are not musical boxes, but, for instance, robot children who can write. In these surroundings, the C sharp of a church clock comes as a revelation. Victor Borel, the producer, has the sense, however, to let the music rest not only during a good deal of the spoken commentary, but also at some other junctures. Such an idea has hardly yet occurred to the creators of *This Modern Age*, though I have been criticizing their tracks for quite a time, and though I hear that some of my film music articles are pasted on a wall in Denham studios. I would like to have a word in deciding which to stick up.

Walter Baumgartner's music for *Sylvian Idyll* and Werner Kruse's scores for *Lakeside Dwellers* and *Water Pygmies* are, despite commentary, continuous, but only in *Water Pygmies* is the texture kept appreciably light during the narrator's passages. While I did not hear the original commentaries of these films, but American speech tracks, it was clear from the music itself that there cannot have been any attempt at melodramatic integration. For the rest, Messrs. Baumgartner and Kruse commit the time-honoured error of preferring description to development. Jack Trommer, on the other hand, treats the climactic end of *Transalpine Cable* in a musical manner. What happens here is, in the priceless words of International Film Renters' publicity department, that "horny hands" pull the cable along the trench and "the sluggish, unwielding worm of lead-weight sinks into safety". But the composer, together with the director, Hans Trommer (!), achieves in this place real poetical realism. Gradually, though nowise hesitantly, the music descends from chromatic intensity to a diatonic dispersion of all worries about the success of the mountaineers' work. And shortly before the disburdening C major is reached the piano enters the orchestral texture with liberating effect. Since, however, our reaction to the outcome of the operation ought not to be repose, or complete discharge of psychic energy, but rather emotional activity, victorious rejoicing with a fair residuum of mental tension, we do not stay in C major, nor does C major turn out to be the dominant, but we turn *into* C major's dominant, and the film ends in G. In this piece, to apply a phrase of Mellers, "there is no attempt at literal illustration, but a dramatic and visual situation is translated into inherently musical terms".

Primarily, however, these Swiss films can teach us what in part we have probably taught them, namely, our own mistakes. This is quite something. The prestige of British film music, as distinct from its quality, is constantly rising, and one or the other foreign film land with, proportionately, fewer competent composers and no money to pay the few, will always be glad to accept our misguidance. So that every British sound track that is as bad as that of *Alpine Control* is about thrice as bad.

H. K.

Book Reviews

Eastern Elements in Western Chant. By Egon Wellesz. (Monumenta Musicae Byzantinae.) Pp. xvi + 212. (Engl. agent, Hugh Rees, Ltd., 47, Pall Mall, London, W.1.) 1947. 30s.

A History of Byzantine Music and Hymnography. By Egon Wellesz. Pp. xiv + 358, illustrated. (Oxford: Clarendon Press.) 1949. 42s.

The history of Western European music is slowly being rewritten. We are becoming increasingly aware that musical history cannot be divided into water-tight compartments. Melody and rhythm are not purely local phenomena but derive from a common pool of musical experience. If we had all the facts we should be able to construct a convincing and coherent account of the development of musical culture in the whole Mediterranean region. As it is, we have to rely on piecing together the evidence that survives. This is the problem that Dr. Wellesz has tackled in *Eastern Elements in Western Chant*—a task for which his unrivalled knowledge of both Eastern and Western music makes him peculiarly fitted. He starts with the fact that bilingual texts occur in Western manuscripts; he also examines in detail the *troparion* "Ὁρὴ τῷ σταυρῷ" (in Latin, *O quando in cruce*), the melody of which occurs both in Byzantine and in Latin sources. These facts are sufficient to suggest a close connection between the music of the Byzantine and the Latin church; and Dr. Wellesz emphasizes the connection still further by illustrating the close correspondence between the formulae of Byzantine and Ambrosian chant. But the matter does not rest there. Bilingual singing is shown to be not peculiar to the Western church but to derive from the East, where Greek and Syriac were in use side by side. Furthermore, since two different languages cannot be sung simultaneously, bilingual singing is closely bound up with the practice of antiphonal singing, and this is confirmed by Western documents in which Greek and Latin texts occur alternately. All this, so far from suggesting that the existence of Greek texts in the Western church is the direct product of Byzantine influence, makes it clear that both Byzantine and Western church music derive from a common source—the music of the early Christian church. Dr. Wellesz also points out that the connection between East and West persisted, drawing attention, for instance, to the large number of Syrians and Greeks who settled in Gaul. The origin of the sequence is one of the threads in the story—a story which Dr. Wellesz would be the last to represent as complete, but which is becoming much clearer to us than it was to the older historians. The details are gradually being filled in; and though we can never hope to know them all, we can be certain that the eventual picture will be far more satisfying than the unsupported generalizations which have had to do duty in the past.

In *Eastern Elements in Western Chant* Dr. Wellesz uses his specialized knowledge of Byzantine music to examine a subject of wider scope. In *A History of Byzantine Music and Hymnography* he sums up the results of thirty years' study of a subject which he has made peculiarly his own and on which he and his colleagues have shed so much new light. This is a book not merely for the musician but also for the liturgiologist and, it is to be hoped, for the general historian, for whom music is too often an irrelevance. Dr. Wellesz covers a very wide field, presenting Byzantine church music not simply as an artistic phenomenon but as the product of a civilization. Particularly admirable is the emphasis on the function of the artist in the Eastern church: he was not so much a creator, in the modern sense, as a recipient.

"The vast treasury of Byzantine melodies was developed from a limited number of archetypes, transmitted by the angels to prophets and inspired saints . . . The artist felt himself, in company with all other artists, as a link in a chain, with his place in the ranks of the faithful, where his position was determined by the measure of his piety."

And though no records of secular Byzantine music survive, the presentation of the pagan background and Christian reaction to it is important and makes a valuable supplement to Gérold's *Les Pères de l'Eglise et la musique*. The more technical part of the volume is

concerned with Byzantine notation and its transcription, and there is a generous appendix of melodies.

The documentation is thorough. Only occasionally does Dr. Wellesz appear to offer information or opinion without support. It is a little perplexing, for instance, to be told that "the organists certainly did not use harmonies, though some concords may have been occasionally introduced"; and the assertion that "the $\psi\alpha\iota$ πνευματικά, the 'spiritual songs' of which St. Paul speaks, were obviously the melismatic melodies of the Alleluias and other exultant songs of praise" needs rather more convincing evidence than is offered here. The exposition is for the most part admirably clear, and there is no indication that the author is not an Englishman by birth, apart from the use of "tones" for "notes" and the translation of *προσῳδία δασεία* and *προσῳδία ψιλή* as "strong" and "weak" breathing instead of the normal "rough" and "smooth" breathing. It is a pity, too, to perpetuate the translation of *αὐλός* as "flute", which is misleading to the general reader. Once or twice Dr. Wellesz appears to underestimate the difficulties that may face the reader who has not already some familiarity with the subject. Riemann's interpretation of the *μαρτυρίαι*, which is justly criticized, seems inexplicably stupid if we are not told that he read the Byzantine letters as the initials of the modes to which he assigned them; and the reader who is familiar only with Gregorian chant will want to know why the Lydian and Phrygian modes have changed places in the table on p. 247. In one place—the description of the *σώματα* and the *πνέματα* on p. 17—there seems to be some confusion in the text. The latter part of the sentence: "If the composer wanted a fourth or sixth to be sung, he set one of the Pneumata indicating a third or a sixth above a Soma" should presumably read "indicating a third or a fifth"; and it is difficult to see how the combination of *σῶμα* and *πνέμα* could be "executed according to the nuance contained in the Pneuma", when the latter has just been defined as "a sign without any dynamic or rhythmical nuance".

These are merely details on a large canvas. They do nothing to weaken the impression that this is a work of solid scholarship, generous in its outlook and free from pedantry, and likely to remain the standard book on the subject for many years to come.

J. A. W.

Musical Chairs. An Autobiography by Cecil Gray. Pp. 324. (Home and van Thal.) 1949. 16s.

Mr. Gray is fifty-four: a little young, perhaps, to compile an autobiography, except by comparison with the contemporary composer who has been honoured with a "Life and Works" at the age of 35! As, however, the author has set a term to his life-story at August, 1939, there would not have been much point in postponing publication of what may prove to be but a first instalment. There might have been some gain in balance and breadth of perspective, but even this is problematical, since such qualities have never been counted among Mr. Gray's strongest literary assets.

His is a voice crying in the wilderness, declaiming bitterly against the public's prolonged disregard of the fundamentals of Art and against its steady contempt for all those values too complex to be summarized in the comic strip or in words of one syllable. Of course he is quite right, but his book does not escape the tedium of preaching to the converted who will think that Gray protests too much, while the unconverted will skip large chunks of his narrative or write him off as a bore.

Much of the descriptive writing is first-rate, particularly of personalities, but there are passages that one has read before and no opinion or description acquires extra validity simply by being recorded more than once. Repetition has long been one of the principal weapons of the prophet and would-be reformer, but an autobiography, surely, is not the place to employ it.

The best pages, it seems to me, are the last in which Mr. Gray gives an account of his two chief compositions, *The Temptation of Saint Anthony* and *The Women of Troy*.*

* See also "The Music of Cecil Gray", by R. Gorer, *MUSIC REVIEW*, VIII, pp. 188-196. [Ed.]

Of the former he writes (p. 313):

"... I had to write it, come what might: the impulse was a categorical imperative, its accomplishment an act of faith, directed *ad maiorem Dei gloriam*. I shall only say that in any other country in the world it would at least have been given a hearing, and that even in this country anyone else would have been given a chance of a hearing; but this is merely a sardonic observation".

Certainly it should be given a hearing; but does Mr. Gray believe that merit alone has much to do with the selection of works for public performance? G. N. S.

Negro Song, Dance and Ceremonial. Katherine Dunham: her dancers, singers and musicians. Edited by Richard Buckle. Pp. xvi + 79. (Ballet Publications, Ltd.) 20s.

Katherine Dunham is the latest of a succession of American singers and dancers to conquer a European audience at first meeting. This book consists of a brief essay and 150 photographs—mostly good: Miss Dunham's background and career are rather too lightly touched in and an error in pagination deprives a dozen pictures of their real credits: nevertheless this work is a handsome celebration of one of the handsomest events in the London Theatre in recent years.

Does the European Theatre give these artists from America a special stimulus? or is the "fine frenzy" of their work a condition of the performances as inseparable as the costumes, music, sets and exotic paraphernalia? Whatever their rating at home these Duncans, Fullers, Millses, Bakers—and now, Dunhams—strike rave notices, packed houses and rabid fans as soon as they touch Europe. One category of Americans remains outside this enquiry—they whose reputations have been made in films; *their* European visitations are usually merely part of a "personal appearance tour", a permission for the fans to glimpse the reality behind the celluloid image adored for years. They descend from Beverly Hills almost as Jupiter might have condescended to step down from Olympus—doubtless accompanied by one of the fourteen celestial mistresses?—to permit himself to be seen by some obscure poet (or peasant) in a remote corner of Bithynia. . . .

When we examine the Dunham Company's performance ("Caribbean Rhapsody") it is apparent that apart from their *ability* to sing like angels and dance like demons these Negro artists have unswerving technical command of the medium in which they work and absolutely sincere projection of personality. This integration of material and presentation was always obvious with Josephine Baker and Florence Mills—and apparently so with Isadora Duncan and Loie Fuller, according to the more objective passages of their biographies. Too often one feels that performers of lesser weight—less endearing manner—have carefully prepared to meet an audience of strangers: how rarely a screen-bred performer behaves convincingly before a live audience! a failure of contact due solely to a misjudgement about the relative importance of oneself and one's public. Perhaps here is the answer to the question posed above; real, spontaneous success depends not only on artistry, on technical control, on perfected performance, but on that extra something which is an unashamed, uninhibited welcome to the audience seated in front . . . "This is my show and I enjoy doing it. I'm going to make you enjoy it, too!" How simple! How unutterably difficult!!

"Caribbean Rhapsody" consisted of two hours of exotic music, dancing and ceremonies drawn from Negro ways of life over a region extending from Brazil northward to the Canadian border; at least twelve recognizable dance styles were evoked, and the music was no less eclectic. Added to these factors were some of the most cleanly designed and well staged sets and costumes to be found in London—of course the show was a success. Dunham on stage was a woman of great beauty and charm, singing, miming, dancing with effortless grace and sincerity; her company supported her to the limit, exactly as she sustained them whether she was on stage or not. Every night the curtain rose on a full house, the cast had something to give and there were people waiting to receive—it was as simple as that.

This sincerity, whether found in Negro or White, is specifically American, completely in line with that quick friendliness, open-handedness and unabashed curiosity shown to

every new person met during every day. The same lack of reticence on stage was a noticeable feature with each of the American ballet companies—so far, only two—seen over here, exactly as it was a big factor in the quick success of "Oklahoma!" when at the beginning of the run the cast was practically 100 per cent. American. Odd that America should seem to be the one place where people still dare to be without either suspicion or condescension . . . or isn't it?

A. V. C.

Music in our Time. By Adolfo Salazar. Pp. 367. (The Bodley Head.) 1948. 15s.

The aim here is "to trace a general scheme whence it will be possible to deduce the parallelism between the social and artistic phenomena of our time". The special field of reference is, of course, music, but this does not prevent Salazar, whose mind is of considerable general culture, from making perceptive comments about the other arts. In his introduction he states his position plainly:—

"Art is no more nor less than a means by which humanity expresses a certain category of ideas; these concepts are not purely logical, like those with which science deals, but intuitive. They operate not only within intellectual areas but upon the senses as well. It is obvious that by virtue of this double process art is an eminently social phenomenon; social because it is human, because it is a special means of communication between two poles that the work of art acts to unite: the author and the audience. It is social in all its consequences. The form society assumes at a given moment is reflected in the art of that moment. That art, so closely bound to the life it mirrors, is affected in an analogous way by the crisis through which the contemporary society may be passing."

Most of the first ten chapters is concerned with the so-called "Romantic" period, to prepare the ground for the discussions of modern music which fill the rest of the book. The promise of the introduction leads one to expect a searching study of music and society. As the book proceeds this hope fades, for Salazar becomes completely absorbed in the savour of the music about which he writes, and he pays but periodic lip-service to his original purpose. The sociological question is barely touched upon in this elaborate and often fascinating essay: even when the other arts are considered, it is in the light of their relation to music rather than to society. Now and again he remembers to mention the political state of Europe at some special stage, especially in his treatment of nationalism, where it can scarcely be ignored. But by the end of the book, bewilderment is complete. The "general scheme" is seen to have been a mirage that disappears as soon as one leaves the desert of sociological speculation about music. At the finish the reader is being escorted through the byways of North- and Latin-American music, whence he is left to find his way home as well as he can.

Salazar is not altogether to blame for this situation, except in the first fact that he has attempted a task beyond the powers of language. No one but a halfwit would deny the profound connections between even the purest music and its social environment. But such connections are already expressed completely in the music itself: it is obvious that a lover of Mozart and Haydn will know far more of the essential air of the latter eighteenth century than the driest and most erudite social historian who ever considered art to be a kind of rash sprung by a social body. If the social historian happens also to be a musical man, he will inevitably find the music he studies impishly deflecting his mind from the general issues, for its essence is untranslatable, as it is also unequivocal. The language-fettered mind, that hardy product of the nineteenth century, is forever trying to drag music down to its own incoherent level, instead of trying to feel the precise, non-verbal implications and reflections in the music: beside these, words are so much stuttering and reason so much mere groping.* This is not to say that it is futile to remark that great music is the natural product of its environment; so it is: the fact is self-evident, but great music is too powerful to put up with this sort of criticism as a final assessment of its significance. Such is the mistake made by most musical sociologists, and the degree of their musicality is measured inversely by their persistence in following the dog-trail.

* In the definition of that profound wit, Alastair Sim, words are "an anodyne for the pain of thinking".

Salazar passes the test with high marks, for music soon captures his full attention: even his brilliant head does not retain its intended grasp on so slippery a subject. He is literally bemused.

The translation of this work from the Spanish is by Isabel Pope, who may perhaps be to blame for some horrible polysyllabic transatlanticisms. The effort of piercing this crust is very rewarding, for every page has some penetrating comment: where the opinions provoke annoyance or simple disagreement they are never empty, nor are they the result of conceit. Salazar's musical knowledge is vast and comprehensive; even his awareness of the very literature of modern music is astonishing and might be incredible but for the fact that his comments are evidence of his first-hand acquaintance with almost every work he mentions. His estimates of individual composers will not always find agreement and some of his points seem rather far-fetched (the passage on p. 246, where he attempts to show how easily the theme of the *scherzo* of Schubert's C minor Symphony could be converted into a *Grundgestalt*, thus indicating how near to the German spirit the twelve-tone music of Berg must be!). But any thoughtful musician who has this book will find his hand often moving towards it, for it is the work of a real thinker. It is perhaps a matter for gratitude that so intelligent a writer has demonstrated fully the danger and confusion that mocks the sociologist's approach to music: wisely, Salazar gives it up long before it can ruin his book.

R. S.

A Bibliography of the Musical Works published by John Walsh during the years 1695-1720.

By William C. Smith. Pp. xxxiv + 215. With 39 plates in collotype. (The Bibliographical Society.) 1948. 30s.

This seems to be the first attempt to compile a posthumous catalogue of a music publisher. By a coincidence, Herr Alexander Weinmann, of Vienna, is just preparing for publication several short-title catalogues of Austrian publishers of the classical period. The present volume deals only with the first, and rather wild, beginnings of Walsh senior, and one or more other volumes are intended by the author to accomplish his task. I think the lay-out of the bibliography is too broad for the limited interest of its subject. Mr. Smith, for many years in charge of the Music Room of the British Museum, is a well-known authority in music bibliography and his knowledge of music printed in England during the eighteenth century probably unique. Therefore, the author could have kept back much of the records he collected, and given us the results only of his research, with some indications of his sources, *e.g.* the dates of the newspaper advertisements of Walsh's publications. To reprint them, as well as the imprints with the varying signs and addresses of Walsh and his temporary partners, seems a waste of space. Concerning these signs and addresses, which also offer some help in dating editions and issues, explanatory notes about changes of style are inserted in italics, and these notes would have been sufficient documentation for the chronological arrangement. The "Index of Titles and Works" should have been modernized: it is enough to find the original, often complicated, titles in the text, and it is rather tiresome to search for them in a pedantic alphabet.

In an extensive introduction the author gives the full story of the Walshes and their successors up to the nineteenth century. He deals with the technique of engraving, with fees and prices, and—not quite convincingly—with copyright and piracy. As to the costs of engraving and printing at that time, an interesting detail could have been found in Gladys Scott Thomson's book, *The Russells in Bloomsbury* (London, 1940, p. 129), where we are told that the second Duke of Bedford paid to Thomas Cross 6s. a plate for the engraving, and 2s. 6d. a hundred (sheets or copies?) for the printing. A special section of Smith's book deals with identification and dating of the temporary catalogues issued by Walsh as supplements of some publications; smaller lists are reprinted or quoted in the text. There are, however, two more catalogues preserved in the Fitzwilliam Museum: the first, *c.* 1733, in Walsh's first issue of Handel's *Opus 1*, "Solos for a German Flute, *etc.*," containing 37 items in "A Cattelogue of Solos for a Violin & a Bass"; the second, *c.* 1735, in Geminiani's *Concerti Grossi, Opera Terza*, with 88 items of "New Musick and

Editions of Musick". Another small addition may be the list of available works published by Walsh in the *London Daily Post* on 18th April, 1738.

The selection of frontispieces, title-pages, catalogues and engraved music pages, reproduced at the end of the book, is excellent, and so are the reproductions. There exists, however, one more frontispiece not mentioned here. It belongs to No. 393, Country Dances for 1712 (in oblong 12°), a copy of which is in the National Library of Ireland. This frontispiece, showing a ball-room, is engraved by Henry Hulsbergh, one of Walsh's regular artists. Another version of it, in woodcut, also preserved at Dublin, decorates No. 488, Nathaniel Kynaston's Country Dances for 1716. All the seven ornamental passe-partout title-pages used by Walsh are reproduced. (Cf. THE MUSIC REVIEW, Vol. II, No. 3, August, 1941, p. 255.)

Of the 642 works listed in the bibliography more than 300 have not been traced by the author. He did not try to find them outside London although he collected some additional information from other libraries. It seems that about forty or more of the unrecorded, or incompletely recorded items might have been found in Cambridge, Dublin, Edinburgh, Glasgow, Manchester and Oxford. One title may be mentioned here, because the book is missing from the bibliography: the fifth edition of Christopher Simpson's *Compendium: or Introduction to Practical Music*, printed by W. P. (i.e. Pearson) for John Young and John Walsh in 1714, a copy of which is in the Library of King's College, Cambridge.

The book, handsomely produced by the Oxford Press, is an important addition to the small shelf of reference books for music libraries. O. E. D.

Henry Purcell. By A. K. Holland. Pp. 191. (Penguin Books.) 1948. 1s. 6d.

The reappearance of A. K. Holland's book amongst the Penguin biographies is no less welcome because it is not a biography. Such a biography is scarcely more possible to write than is a biography of Shakespeare, and so much as is possible has been done, since this book first appeared, by Professor Westrup. Mr. Holland's book is, anyway, more concerned with the social background and with the relationship of the composer with his age. For this, and for the useful survey of Purcell's music, this cheap edition should be valued. N. G. L.

Musikgeschichte im Überblick. By Jacques Handschin. Pp. 432. (Verlag Räber & Cie., Lucerne.) Fr. 25.00.

Most one-man histories of music are written by people who are more familiar with the music of later than (say) 1580 than with that before it; they also write for readers with similar horizons. But Professor Handschin is a distinguished mediaevalist and will have nothing to do with the belief that "what is nearer to us is worthy of greater notice":

"That may be all very well for the amateur who, in the concert-hall or at home, is concerned only with the music of the later centuries; but it is not a historical standpoint. Why should the history of music be treated differently from other branches of history, in which no one would consider Caesar, Homer or Johannes Erigena as of secondary importance?"

And he very properly takes his stand against "the nineteenth century (and partly also eighteenth century) heresy according to which [music] has in the course of time become 'even better'". Accordingly, it seems to him that any one century of musical history deserves as much space as any other. We are half way through his book before we get to the fourteenth century; the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries together get 56 pages, the seventeenth and eighteenth 76, the nineteenth and twentieth (in so far as Professor Handschin deigns to notice the present century) 32. It is clear that we have to do with a strongly idiosyncratic view of history—just how idiosyncratic may be gathered from the final entries in the seven-page chronology (beginning with the Sumerian period). These are apparently, in Professor Handschin's view, the outstanding landmarks of music since *Pelléas et Mélisande*:

- 1905 Reger's *Sinfonietta*, Op. 90.
- 1908 Ravel's *Suite Ma mère l'oye*.

- 1909 Strauss' *Elektra*; Taneev's treatise *Invertible Counterpoint in Strict Style*.
 1910 Reger's *Die Nonnen* for chorus and orchestra.
 1913 Skryabin's *Prometheus*.
 1916 Glazunov's second Prelude and Fugue for Organ, Op. 98.

We have to do not only with a strongly idiosyncratic historian but with a highly contentious one. Professor Handschin delights in contradiction and controversy. He pauses to argue, sometimes sarcastically, with Riemann and Curt Sachs about the priority of the pentatonic system; with Guido Adler about the meaning of "heterophony"; with Hornbostel about his theory of "blown fifths" (Professor Handschin is apparently unaware of Mr. Llewellyn Lloyd's demolition of this theory in the *Monthly Musical Record*, Vol. LXXVI); with the experts who believe in Jewish influences in early Christian music; with the "comparative philologists"; with that other distinguished specialist in his own field, Friedrich Ludwig, on a dozen points; with Arnold Schering. . . Someone's idiotic remark that "We Germans can boast of having the greatest musician, Bach, and the greatest statesman, Bismarck" provokes him to a general attack on the *Bach-Verehrer* in general and a 14-page section on Bach which, however good in itself, is quite disproportionate. All this is very lively and stimulating and refreshingly different from some of the products of "Musikwissenschaft"; but although Professor Handschin often carries one with him—and one must give the most respectful attention to everything he says about the music of the Middle Ages—a less polemical approach and more cool judgment would carry even more weight.

When one has discounted the crankiness and the contentiousness, this "Musikgeschichte im Überblick" remains a fine achievement. Apart from the numerous points on mediaeval and renaissance music, which will have to be carefully weighed by all later specialists—e.g. the discussion of the problematical *paraphonistae* of the seventh century "Ordo Romanus", the argument that polyphonic singing was occasionally practised a good deal earlier than is commonly supposed, the suggestion that we may have in a fifteenth century manuscript the melody—here set to the words "Nu hebit sich gross weynen", a lament of the Virgin—to which the *Nibelungenlied* was sung, the attention drawn to the musical information in Teofilo Folengo's macaronic poem *Baldus*, the arguments on the role of instruments in music of the fourteenth to sixteenth centuries, the author's handling of the rich and complicated web of musical history commands one's deep respect. This is particularly true of the section on the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries. Broadly speaking, the book is organized according to style-periods and not overloaded with dates and details—except the details that happen to fascinate the author. But Professor Handschin regards with suspicion attempts to relate such musical periods to art-periods generally; the word "baroque" in particular is the most brilliant of scarlet rags to him.

At the very end of the book he allows himself one last outburst in a *Nachwort* on "our relationship to old music", in which he lets fall a number of dicta on the use of old instruments and so on which contain a great many grains of truth but might easily be manufactured by our English "no-nonsense-about-antiquarianism" friends into ammunition for their point of view. His final "moral" calls for vigorous refutation: that, although music and musicology may go hand in hand and help each other, they are really quite independent and "it is not the aim or justification of musicology to serve the art by helping the practical musician with editions of old music or data about performing practice".

The bibliographical apparatus is admirable so far as the older music is concerned. And Professor Handschin is nothing if not accurate. But surely the Bach theme on which Reger wrote his Variations, Op. 81, comes from Cantata No. 128, not No. 13 as stated on p. 321?

Le Baroque et la Musique: essai d'esthétique musicale. By Suzanne Clercx. Pp. 246. (Editions de la Librairie Encyclopédique: Brussels.) 1948. Fr. 80.00.

It would be unfair to Mlle. Clercx to compare her study with the much more substantial volumes on the same subject by Bukofzer and Robert Haas. Within its much more

modest limits, it does give a clear, concise, scholarly survey of the musical period which it is so convenient to call "baroque". But Mlle. Clercx is not content with the mere convenience of the term, which Haas accepts with little discussion and Bukofzer with practically none at all. She begins with a full examination of the word itself and its history, the various senses in which it has been employed by aestheticians and historians of art in general and of music in particular, especially—indeed almost exclusively up to now—in Germany and Italy: these first forty pages, summarizing the various definitions, are among the most valuable of her book. The diversity of views is extraordinary: on the limits of the Baroque Age in time, on its essential characteristics, on the extent to which these characteristics are shared—if at all—by music. The one point on which nearly everyone does agree is that, if there was such a thing as baroque art, it flourished mainly in the seventeenth century. Mlle. Clercx therefore turns next to the music of that century, with that of the later sixteenth in which it is rooted and that of the early eighteenth in which it culminated, and subjects it to searching examination. (She has pressed perhaps unnecessarily far forward into the eighteenth century, beyond J. S. Bach to his sons and the Mannheim symphonists in whose music the "baroque" idiom, however we define it, was practically extinct.)

First she sketches the general history century by century and country by country; then she examines in more detail the typical forms and characteristics of style, always asking whether these forms and characteristics bear any relation to the various definitions she has passed in review in her "Introduction". Again and again, she feels able to answer affirmatively. She finds the spirit and tendencies recognized as "baroque" by some or all aestheticians, in the madrigalisms and the Venetian choral antiphony of the late sixteenth century, in the melodic tendency of this period to binary structure and "anti-thetic character", to "rupture of equilibrium", in its harmonic manifestation of the "goût du bizarre, du merveilleux, du stupéfiant"; she finds them equally in the form of the instrumental suite ("forme infinie et toujours susceptible de prolongement . . . Forme qui fuse et jamais ne s'arrête. Forme baroque par là") and in the nature of the fugue ("La fugue, forme idéalement mouvante, forme qui fuse, aux jeux incessants, d'autant plus libre qu'elle est contrainte, d'autant plus légère qu'elle s'élance du tremplin d'une sévère polyphonie et d'une forme accomplie, la fugue est paradoxale, et, par là, idéalement baroque"). In particular, she has been impressed by the antithesis that E. d'Ors seeks to establish in his book *Du Baroque* (Gallimard: Paris, 1935) between the typical baroque "formes qui s'envolent" and the classical "formes qui pèsent", and she has little difficulty in discovering "formes qui s'envolent" throughout the period she is studying. But d'Ors uses the word "baroque" in a very wide sense indeed, as the antonym of "classical" and therefore, as he ends by admitting, the synonym of "romantic"; his snark turns out, after all, to be only the old familiar boojum. Mlle. Clercx realizes that this gets us nowhere, that seventeenth-century baroque has very little in common with nineteenth-century romanticism; but she seeks to distinguish them by advancing a series of propositions that are, to say the least, questionable—that "Baroque is a style, is creator of a style, while Romanticism has none", that "Baroque is a constant, while Romanticism is limited to a definite time". . .

All that this really amounts to is the establishment of a truth that few would dispute: that the history of music is the history of successive style-periods each reflecting a state of mind in some way contrasted with that of the previous period. Sometimes that history has to chronicle an alternation between balance or "formes qui pèsent" and unrest or "formes qui s'envolent"; we have all agreed to call the last great period of the latter type "romantic"; if we can agree to call the earlier one that lasted from about 1600 into the first half of the eighteenth century "baroque", we shall have gained a useful label. The rest is hair-splitting.

The main value of Mlle. Clercx' book lies not in its arrival at a goal, but in its travelling. It traverses a fascinating tract of music and gives a generally clear and accurate account of it, and being written by a Belgian, it takes some interesting byways through the Austrian Netherlands that would probably have been ignored by an English, French or

German guide; we are shown, in passing, something of the symphonies of Pierre van Maldere, of the work of the eighteenth-century Belgian clavecinists, of the sonatas for violin and continuo of Ph. van Wichel and Charles Hacquardt. Sometimes one would like to argue with Mlle. Clercx—about her precise differentiation of *ricercari*, *fantasias* and *canzone* on p. 184, or about the Catholic bias which distracts her attention from Protestant Passion music. And one must deplore the careless proof-reading that has given us, for instance, "Joh.-Heinrich Schein" on p. 100 and a reference to his "*Bocchetto musicale*" on p. 156. But these are minor flaws in a good piece of work.

Ein schwäbisches Mozartbuch. By Ernst Fritz Schmid. Pp. 500. (Alfons Bürger Verlag: Lorch and Stuttgart.) 1948.

A five-hundred page book on the Suabian connections of Mozart and his family is bound to arouse a suspicion of "book-making" or at least inflation, and the suspicion is not unjustified. Dr. Schmid has a not unpleasant, if slightly flowery style, but he is unnecessarily wordy; the ideas of "selection" or "relative importance" have never entered his head; and when he has given us every possible detail he adds more than a hundred pages of notes—some of them, admittedly, important or interesting—and by way of further padding, forty pages of the letters exchanged by Mozart and his parents or their friends and relations when one or the other of them happened to be in Suabia. There is, naturally, any amount of *echt schwäbisch* this, that and the other in the characters of Mozart and his father. The Mozarts have only to visit Biberbach on 6th November, 1766, and we get a page or so on the pilgrimage-church there and the festival of 1755 and another three pages on the organist and organist's grandson (who competed with Wolfgang) and a further page or so on the organ that succeeded the organ the boys played on. Mozart meets Suabian acquaintances at a posting-station—and Dr. Schmid at once obligingly wastes several pages on their biographies, which may be interesting to local antiquarians but to no one else. (Let us be fair: the book was commissioned by the city of Augsburg.)

Yet the book cannot be neglected by the serious student of Mozart however often he may deplore its excess of needless detail, for it does make some real, if small, contributions to Mozart biography. Even the Biberbach incident is a case in point; up to now it has always been supposed to have occurred in the town of Biberach; Dr. Schmid is able to show that it actually happened in the quite different village of Markt Biberbach. He has also traced the Suabian forebears of the Mozarts one more generation back to a David Mozart who died at Pfersee about 1626, the father of the David Mozart who has long been known as Wolfgang's great-great-grandfather. And he has much to tell us about variants of the name, which include Moszhart, Muszenhart, Mozert, Mozet and Mozer, and Leopold's early days in Augsburg, the performance there of his *Bauren-Hochzeit* and *Musikalische Schlittenfahrt*, the Augsburg publisher of the famous "Violin School", and that notorious hussy, Wolfgang's Augsburg *Bäsele*.

All this has little enough to do with music. But Dr. Schmid also tells us a few new things about the music, some his own discoveries, some gleanings from wartime German publications, such as the *Neues Mozart-Jahrbuch*, which most of us have missed. Egon von Komorzynski, for instance, has discovered that "Ein Mädchen oder Weibchen" is based on a folksong from Upper Suabia, while Dr. Schmid himself has identified as folk-tunes both the variation-theme and the theme of the finale of the Divertimento in B flat, K.287. Most important of all, Friedrich Schnapp, writing on "New Mozart Discoveries at Donaueschingen" in the second number of the *Jahrbuch* (1942) has studied the scores Mozart sent to Prince Joseph Maria Fürstenberg in 1786: autograph copies of the symphonies, K.425, 319 and 338, and the piano concertos, K.451, 459 and 488. As the original autograph of the *Linz* Symphony, K.425, is lost, Mozart's copy at Donaueschingen is of special interest—and according to Schnapp it differs considerably from the familiar version in the *Gesamtausgabe*. The Donaueschingen score of K.319 lacks the minuet, which was added later, and in the first violin part of the second movement of K.338, after "Andante di molto" Mozart wrote the afterthought "più tosto Allegretto".

Paul Hindemith. By Heinrich Strobel. (Dritte völlig umgearbeitete und erweiterte Ausgabe.) Pp. 144. (B. Schott's Söhne: Mainz.) 1948.

Dr. Strobel's little book on Hindemith has long been recognized as a standard work, but since the appearance of the second edition in 1932 a great deal has happened to Hindemith as well as to Germany; it traced Hindemith's development only as far as *Das Unaufhörliche*. A new edition, brought nearly up to date, and incidentally under a new imprint, is therefore most welcome. The first chapter has been almost entirely re-written and, although the new edition is half as big again as the second, Dr. Strobel has been obliged to make a number of cuts and condensations in the old chapters. Some of these cuts are regrettable. Readers of the new edition will not, for instance, learn of Hindemith's string quartet arrangement of the *Flying Dutchman* overture, made for the delectation of his colleagues of the Amar Quartet. More seriously: they will lose at the beginning of the section entitled "Der neue Stil" half-a-dozen pages of valuable technical discussion of Hindemith's style in the 1920s—formulated, it is true, in terms of traditional harmony, not those of the *Unterweisung im Tonsatz*, but none the worse for that. Musical illustrations have been cut, too; some of them unfortunately. For instance on p. 66 we are referred to "the beginnings of several variations" which were duly printed in the second edition; here we are given only the theme! Again, in the *Unaufhörliche* chapter, we are asked to compare "the first bass aria with the tenor song in the Third Part" but are now given only the bass aria; and on the next page we are referred for a passage in No. 9 to "a musical example in the appendix", which was duly printed there in the 1932 edition but does not appear in the present one.

The new chapters deal admirably with Hindemith's output from *Mathis* to the *Symphonische Metamorphosen von Themen von Weber* (1943) and the E flat Quartet (1944); the list of works carries the tale further, down to the clarinet Concerto of 1947 and the cello Sonata of 1948. Among the more recent things (1947), one notes a "vollständige Neufassung" of the *Marientleben* of 1924, and a specimen page of the manuscript is given in the appendix—a page almost free of accidentals! (The American climate has an odd effect on these expatriates; must we now expect a nearly diatonic version of *Pierrot Lunaire*?) In one of the earlier chapters Dr. Strobel has inserted an account of one of Hindemith's older compositions, of which we have heard little in England: his music for the "Plöner Musiktag" of June, 1932. Plön in Holstein had a notable *Jugendmusikschule* for whose festival Hindemith wrote a three-movement *Turmmusik* to open the day, *Tafelmusik* for lunch, a cantata to words from the *Musica teutsch* of Martin Agricola, and an *Abendkonzert* ending with a Quodlibet on melodies heard earlier in the day.

Dr. Strobel has essayed in one chapter a "plaine and easie" introduction to the theories of the first part of the *Unterweisung im Tonsatz*. It is, as he admits, a far from exhaustive account but it will serve for most readers, and here in the book it adequately explains the clarification of Hindemith's later harmony.

It would be useful to have this book translated. But if an English publisher should pursue the idea, he would do well to insist (a) on restoration of some of the cut passages from the second edition, (b) on a further bringing up to date.

G. A.

Reviews of music are unavoidably held over.

Gramophone Records

Strauss: Don Quixote, Op. 35.

Rubens (viola), Tortelier (cello) and the Royal Philharmonic Orchestra, c. Beecham.

His Master's Voice DB 6796-800. 30s.

Unfortunately this performance has neither the accuracy, the vitality, nor the exuberant lyricism of Reiner's magnificent reading on American Columbia. This newer recording is slightly the better technically, but the Reiner set is the one to buy if you can get it.

*Wolf: Italian Serenade in G.**

The Schneiderhan Quartet.

Columbia LX 1168. 6s.

A most auspicious first record from a string ensemble which proves itself to be of the highest quality. To listen to such clean, crisp, meticulous playing as we are given here is sheer delight. The recording is good with quiet surfaces.

*Handel: Violin Sonata No. 4 in D.**

Goldberg and Moore.

Parlophone R 20568-69. 12s.

The performance exemplifies the impeccable musicianship we have come to expect of both players. The recording is unusually successful in capturing something really like the true sound of a violin.

Schubert: Seligkeit and Die Forelle.*

Elisabeth Schwarzkopf and Karl Hudez.

Columbia LB 77. 4s.

Seligkeit is given the better performance, being really superb from all points of view. *Die Forelle* lacks intensity. The recording is good.

*Mozart: Divertimento in D. (K. 131).**

Royal Philharmonic Orchestra, c. Beecham.

His Master's Voice DB 6649-51. 18s.

Serenade (K. 185).

Paris Chamber Orchestra, c. Oubradous.

Neglected Masterpiece Recording NM 1-3.

*Serenade in B flat (K. 361).**

Vienna Philharmonic Wind-players, c. Furtwängler.

His Master's Voice DB 6707-11. 30s.

It is a great pleasure to be able to welcome a new recording company, particularly when it sets out to record neglected masterpieces. Unfortunately, however, K. 185 is no masterpiece and the records as such leave much to be desired. They are very deficient in bass and also in extreme treble response, the quality of the pressings varies considerably (not that they are unique in this respect), there is a thin high "whistle" effect towards the end of most of the sides and the performance is not outstandingly good. We understand that further issues are contemplated, an excellent project; but we hope better music will be chosen, that it will be better played and better recorded.

The two H.M.V. sets are excellent. If a best has to be chosen it must be K. 131—not that the performance is superior to that of K. 361, but the recording is. The trouble with the latter is that the acoustic "level" is so low that the result is likely to sound like

* Strongly recommended.

so many mice blowing in a cellar unless a great deal of volume is used in reproduction. One movement is omitted from K. 361, while Beecham, for some reason best known to himself, interpolates a minuet and trio from K. 287 into his performance of K. 131; the divergence of styles is noticeable and disrupts the unity of the piece.

*Haydn: The Seven Last Words from the Cross.**

The Griller Quartet.

Decca AK 2139-47. 42s. 9d.

This is a first-rate achievement. The Grillers have never played better and the recording, at its best, is unusually successful in capturing the sound of a string quartet. From the latter point of view not all the sides are equally good, but there are no blemishes serious enough to disturb the listener's enjoyment. One of the outstanding issues of recent months. The minuet and trio from Op. 103 in D minor occupy the eighteenth side.

Sibelius: Symphony No. 2 in D. Op. 43.

London Philharmonic Orchestra, c. Cameron.

Decca AK 2127-31. 23s. 9d.

A clean, well-balanced recording of a very ordinary performance. The bass in particular is firm, true and properly differentiated. But the LPO can play much better than this and the set is recommended only to those whose interests are more technical than musical.

Mozart: Sonata in B flat, K. 570.

Schnabel.

His Master's Voice DB 6839-40. 12s.

Without wishing to revive the correspondence on Mozart's "self-quotations", listeners may find in this slow movement (side 2) quite distinct reminiscences of K. 540. Schnabel's playing is typically authoritative but in the finale is not always immaculate. The fourth side of the set submitted for review has an exceptionally noisy surface.

Schumann: Symphony No. 1 in B flat, Op. 38.

National Symphony Orchestra, c. Coppola.

Decca AK 2151-54. 19s.

Quite the best version to be had. The performance is intelligent and sympathetic, even if some of the musical epigrams are less dramatic than they might be. The recording is reasonably good, but not up to Decca's highest standard.

*Bach: Violin Concerto in E major.**

Gioconda de Vito with the London Chamber Orchestra, c. Bernard.

His Master's Voice DB 6884-86. 18s.

Apart from obtrusive surface noise on side 5 this is a magnificent set of records. Gioconda de Vito plays the slow movement as beautifully as one could wish and the recording on the whole is better than the average.

Dvořák: Symphony No. 4 in G, Op. 88.

Philharmonia Orchestra, c. Kubelik.

His Master's Voice C 3852-56. 20s.

The coarse, strident quality of "Philharmonia" recordings, of which we have often complained in the past, matters less in this Symphony than in any other music that comes to mind. Why has nobody ever christened it "The Butcher"? Only Dvořák had the secret of this particular raucous combination of top strings and brass, and, while the result is strikingly individual, one may remain grateful that no composer of note has

* Strongly recommended.

seen fit to try and perpetuate the style. The present overblown, and one might add "overscraped" performance transports the Czech peasant's orchestral slaughter-house to the listener's drawing room with commendable realism and vigour: but one is left with the question—is it music? There is a hot-blooded drive about this rendering and a rough and ready aptness in the recording which together make the set well worth a hearing; but a little more polish expended on both would have made these records a more effective ambassador for the composer.

*Cherubini: Overture, The Water Carrier.**

Bournemouth Municipal Orchestra, c. Schwarz.

His Master's Voice C 3865. 4s.

It is many years since the Bournemouth orchestra played as well as this, if, indeed, they ever did. Rudolf Schwarz obtains a clean performance and the orchestral balance is good. The recording is satisfactory, and, best of all, the thing has style. We hope that this record is merely the first of a series and that future issues may show an equally enterprising choice of music "off the beaten track".

G. N. S

Prokofiev: Ballet Music from Cinderella.

Royal Opera House Orchestra, c. Braithwaite.

Columbia DX 1562-4. 12s.

Wagner: The Flying Dutchman—Overture and*

Lohengrin—Prelude to Act III.

The Philharmonia Orchestra, c. Kletzki.

Columbia LX 1160-1. 12s.

Lohengrin—Prelude to Act I.

The Philharmonia Orchestra, c. Kletzki.

Columbia LX 1153. 6s.

Elgar: Pomp and Circumstance Marches, No. 1 in D and No. 4 in G.

The Philharmonia Orchestra, c. Sargent.

Columbia DX 1561. 4s.

Auber: The Crown Diamonds—Overture.

Boston Promenade Orchestra, c. Fiedler.

His Master's Voice C 3857. 4s.

Rossini: William Tell—Overture.

Symphony Orchestra of the Augusteo, Rome, c. Sabata.

His Master's Voice DB 6880-1. 12s.

The atmosphere and personalia of the ballet is such that only musicians possessed of certain queer traits can assume its motley and remain sincere. Just as, when a certain type of person wears padded shoulders and velvet pants, accentuates his waistline and waves his hair, he convinces us of something about himself, so some writers of ballet music have been convincing. Most have not; two modern examples are Arthur Bliss and Sergei Prokofiev, each of whom has written ballet music in a purely pot-boiling way. (Yet both have written inspired film music.) *Cinderella* is rubbish; beautifully played, well recorded, but rubbish. Compare it, for example, with *Crown Diamonds*, the composer of which, by the stature of Prokofiev, was a small man. Auber sets out a string of tunes to a simple plan which he believes in, and for their own cheerful sake. He succeeds in thrilling us; his tunes are not half so clever as those in *Cinderella* and his orchestration utterly naive, but he succeeds. Fiedler and his orchestra help him greatly in this, but so can the military band in the park.

Sabata's *William Tell* cannot be discussed. H.M.V. have stamped the disc holes so oddly that no arts known to the gramophile can prevent these records swinging wildly and making nonsense of the performance.

* Strongly recommended.

Sargent's performance is not sufficiently different from, nor Columbia's recording sufficiently better than, Braithwaite and the L.S.O. on Decca K 1140-1 to have made acceptable these repetitions of Elgar being pompous and circumstantial.

Whereas Kletzki's Prelude to act I of *Lohengrin* is merely acceptable, his performance of the act III Prelude is a worthy companion to the magnificence of the *Flying Dutchman*. This latter set is one of Philharmonia's best performances and everything they do gets on to the record.

*Ravel: L'Enfant et les Sortilèges.**

Cast as below, Orchestre National de la Radiodiffusion Française, c. Ernest Bour.
Columbia LX 1124-LXS 1129. 33s.

Cast: Sauterau, Scharley, Vessières, Michel, le Marc'Hadour, Peyron, Turba-Rabier, Angelici, Prigent, Legouhy, Verneuil. Artistic Director F. Agostini.

This work is, essentially, a musical cartoon. It is difficult to think that it could ever be given an opera-house production. No stage-business can possibly add to, indeed it is bound to subtract from the superb imagery etched by the music. The libretto is a poem by Colette, telling the story of a naughty child. It opens with him cheeking *Maman*. Left alone, he has a nightmare. Furniture he has kicked, cats he has plagued, a squirrel he has engaged and schoolbooks he abused take voice, upbraid and threaten him. He retreats to the garden where trees he has scarred and frogs he has tortured, birds, animals and insects turn on him. In the fracas a squirrel is injured; the whimpering child and the wounded animal lie together in their fear. The child tends the hurt paw of his companion, whereon the garden beings seek to help him in return for his change of heart. This they do by repeating in chorus the two syllables that the child, now dumb with fear and misery, has uttered through his nightmare: "*Maman*". Mamma appears to the waking child and all is well.

The whole thing is superbly sung and played and, in particular Nadine Sauterau, as the child, has put on record a truly beautiful performance. The standard as a whole is much higher than that we are used to from the English equivalent of Radiodiffusion Française and the opera producers of Portland Place could learn a lot from these records.

The recording is uncommonly good, but only really high-class reproducers will sustain it at all points. Some passages (e.g. the "armchair" episode on side two) which depend on contra bassoons and/or on double basses need high fidelity reproduction and so, to speak of the opposite end of the scale, do many of the highly-pitched exclamatory passages. We have, lately, not heard many full-length issues as nearly worth the cost.

Brahms: Immer leiser wird mein Schlummer, Op. 105, No. 2 and

Schubert: Frühlingstraum.

Eugenia Zareska, acc. John Wills.

Decca K 1943. 4s. 9d.

In der Ferne and

Abschied.

Max Lichtegg, acc. G. Solti.

Decca K 2172. 4s. 9d.

Fauré: Les Berceaux, Op. 23, No. 1, and

Le Soir, Op. 83, No. 2.

Bernac, acc. Poulenc.

His Master's Voice DA 1907. 4s.

Winterreise should be sung by a man; so that Miss Zareska's musicianly effort at *Frühlingstraum* did not interest us. But her performance of *Immer leiser* is heavenly and makes the record very well worth having. Wills is a perfect accompanist and voice and piano are recorded to a high standard. Max Lichtegg has a fine voice for *lieder*;

* Strongly recommended.

had his accompaniment—beautifully played—been made to sound like a real piano this would be a starred record.

The Bernac-Poulenc record is to the standard we expect from this team when performing French songs. Composed with ten years between, *Les Berceaux* and *Le Soir* indicate clearly the essence of Fauré's development as a song writer. The internal organization is very little changed; the growth is in fluidity of line.

*Berg: Wozzeck; Fragments from the Opera.**

Gertrude Ribla and the Philadelphia Orchestra, c. Ormandy.

Columbia LX 1158-9. 12s.

Verdi: Otello—"Gia nella notte densa."

Daniza Ilitsch, Richard Tucker and the Metropolitan Opera Orchestra, c. Rudolf.

Columbia LX 1144. 6s.

Rigoletto—"Ella mi fu rapita", and

Donizetti: L'Elisir d'amore—"Una Furtiva Lagrima".

Tagliavini and orchestra, c. Dorati.

His Master's Voice DB 6856. 6s.

Puccini: Tosca—"Perchè chiuso?"

Florence Quartararo and Ramon Vinay with orchestra, c. Morel.

His Master's Voice DB 6857. 6s.

The *Wozzeck* set does an important service. Marie is the central character of the work, in the musical sense, and its whole stark tragedy pivots round her emotions. This set of scenas for soprano and orchestra covers the wide emotional range achieved in the work and reveals most of the subtleties of Berg's scoring. Thus, in two records, we have an approach to the opera which can go far in breaking down popular prejudices about the atonal Berg. Performance is convincing, and recording passable.

The Tagliavini record is a first-class job of recording, but the singing is unsatisfactory. His top notes are rough, and in the Verdi aria he is dangerously unsure of his pitch. The Donizetti side goes far to retrieve the Verdi, but is not an outstanding effort. In listening to the two love duets, from *Otello* and *Tosca*, one cannot help marvelling at the power with which Verdi evokes passion in his music. The big emotional scene from Puccini's opera is, in comparison, as a love scene by Ouida might read alongside an apposite passage from Pushkin or Anatole France. Both records are well-made, though far from perfect. There is a tendency for Quartararo's top notes to blast and in the *Otello* excerpt Tucker is in much better voice than Ilitsch.

Debussy: Danse (Tarantelle Styrienne) and Valse (La plus que lente).

Giesecking.

Columbia LX 1146. 6s.

Kabalevsky: Sonata No. 3, Op. 46.

Moiseiwitsch.

His Master's Voice C 3829-30. 8s.

*Mendelssohn: Sonata in A, Op. 65, No. 3, 1st Movement.**

Jeanne Demessieux.

Decca K 1700. 4s. 9d.

The two Debussy works, which appeared in 1890 alongside *Suite Bergamasque* are, undeservedly, much less frequently heard than the bits and pieces of this latter. Giesecking, the best Debussy pianist alive, plays both the delicate *Valse* and the full-blooded *Danse* finely. We have had better piano recording from Columbia. The three movement Kabalevsky work is attractive and well-moulded, though by no means profound. The middle section is a slow waltz which may follow a few other sonata movements into the

* Strongly recommended.

category of salon-piece in its own right; it is as tuneful as that and perhaps too good to treat thus. Performance is convincing and, except for some surface noise, the recording acceptable.

Decca's latest organ recording is their best yet. It is also the best ever made in our opinion. It must be said that Mendelssohn's quiet movement requires not the largest armament of the St. Mark's Church organ and the piece is a relatively easy test for engineers. But there it is, and, well performed as it is, a really satisfactory organ record at last.

Schubert: Symphony No. 6 in C Major.

The London Symphony Orchestra, c. Krips.

Decca AK 2119-22. 19s.

How difficult it is to realize that the composer of this work wrote the C major Symphony. The eleven short years between the two works represent more than half of Schubert's adult life and the rate at which his young genius burgeoned is much more truly expressed in them than in his development as a song writer. For, after all, *Erlkönig* at 18 does not, despite some precious pundits, leave much developing to be done. So, for Schubert students, a good recording of this less than great Symphony is important. And here we almost have it. Were it not for some super-Toscanini effects in loud-soft gradations, notably in the winding up of the first movement, the set would get full marks for recording and nearly so for conducting. The playing, especially wood-wind, is frequently exquisite and always sound.

*Mozart: Concerto in D, K218.**

Heifetz and The Royal Philharmonic Orchestra, c. Beecham.

His Master's Voice DB 6678-80. 18s.

*Geminiani: Concerto Grosso in C minor.**

The Boyd Neel String Orchestra, c. Boyd Neel.

Decca K 2124. 4s. 9d.

Here at last a recording of the Boyd Neel strings which is recognizable, in all details, as their work. Apart from the fact that no one has uttered early classical loveliness more truly in two small *graves* and two small *allegros* than has Geminiani, the playing is perfect and the recording first-class.

Everyone for whom recorded music has meaning should possess a performance of Mozart's most perfect violin Concerto. The present issue has so little wrong with it as a performance and is technically so much in advance of previous recordings that we can recommend it with confidence.

*Wagner: Der Fliegende Holländer—"Die Frist ist um".**

Berglund and orchestra, c. Blech.

His Master's Voice DB 6378. 6s.

Verdi: Il Trovatore—Recit. and Aria: "D'amor sull'ali rosee", and

*Bellini: Norma—Recit. and Aria: "Casta Diva".**

Zinka Milanov and orchestra, c. Weissmann.

His Master's Voice DB 6877. 6s.

Offenbach: La Périchole—"O mon cher amant" (Act 1); "Ah! Quel dîner" (Act 1); "Mon Dieu! que les hommes sont bêtes" (Act 2); "Je t'adore" (Act 3), and Tales of Hoffmann—"Belle Nuit".

Jennie Tourel with orchestra, c. Maurice Abravanel.

Columbia LB 79-80. 8s.

* Strongly recommended.

Bizet: Carmen—The Flower Song, and

Massenet: Werther—"J'aurais sur ma poitrine".

Raoul Jobin and Orchestre National du Théâtre de l'Opéra-Comique, c. Cluytens.

Columbia LX 1171. 6s.

Werther—"Pourquoi me reveiller?" and

Manon—"En fermant les yeux".

Tagliavini and orchestra, c. Morel.

His Master's Voice DB 6854. 6s.

Moussorgsky: Boris Godounov—Monologue of Boris (Act 2); Duo between Boris and Prince Shouisky (Act 2); and Clock Scene (Act 2).

Kipnis and Tamarin with R.C.A. Victor Symphony Orchestra, c. Berezowsky.

His Master's Voice DB 6482-3. 12s.

Berglund's performance of the Dutchman's big aria is beautifully enunciated and sung with great dramatic sense. The unnamed orchestra gives a distinguished accompaniment all of which, and the scoring here is heavy, has been secured in the recording.

The singing in the well known Act 2 excerpts from *Boris* is very fine, both from the bass and his tenor support, but the orchestra is recorded rather coarsely. The arias from *Carmen* and *Werther* can be recommended as well-made records of a stylish performer, but for true operatic style Zinka Milanov's record is outstanding. The full recitatives which precede each are given and in "Casta Diva" the sotto voce chorus is present. This is one of the best of recent operatic records.

Tagliavini's record is not recommended. It is a poor buy in that both arias could have gone on one side. Also there is too much surface noise.

Miss Tourel is possibly the greatest living mezzo-soprano. Her present contribution would be worthy of the highest praise were it not for the travesty provided on the trick *Tales of Hoffmann* side. *La Pêrichole* must be a delightful work judged by these little songs, sung here with great skill and rare subtlety.

*Handel: Messiah—"I know that my Redeemer liveth".**

Ada Alsop.

Decca K 2137. 4s. 9d.

Alexander's Feast—"Revenge, Timotheus cries".

Trevor Anthony.

Decca K 2138. 4s. 9d.

Both with the London Symphony Orchestra, c. Sargent.

Every word of Miss Alsop's aria is beautifully enunciated and every note is true; Sir Malcolm and the L.S.O. strings contrive a perfect accompaniment for Decca to provide the best recording of this celebrated aria that we know.

Unfortunately for Trevor Anthony whose singing deserved better, the orchestra in his case is shabbily recorded. If these two records were made at one session, acoustic adjustments such as would accommodate the noisy brass in *Timotheus* cannot have been made; the strings in the *Messiah* excerpt are well enough recorded.

Bach: Toccata and Fugue in D minor.

Columbia LX 1181. 6s.

Sibelius: Symphony No. 2 in D, Op. 43.

Columbia LX 1175-9. 30s.

Strauss (R.): Der Rosenkavalier—Suite.

Columbia LX 1183-5. 18s.

Salome—Dance of the Seven Veils.

Columbia LX 1172. 6s.

* Strongly recommended.

Strauss (J.): Die Fledermaus—Overture.

Columbia LX 1182. 6s.

Tales from the Vienna Woods.

Columbia LX 1180. 6s.

All played by the Philadelphia Orchestra, c. Ormandy.

Here are deep mysteries. In the first place what has happened to the famous string tone of this orchestra, which enabled us before the war to spot any Philadelphia recording blindfold? Not that the strings have failed; indeed their contribution to all these performances is consistently good. But they are different, and sound now just like the B.B.C. or the Philharmonia (on a good day). Perhaps this last characteristic went with Stokowski. And then, why must the recording engineers be so fickle? The Sibelius Symphony is one of the best engineering efforts we have had in months, the *Salome* excerpt quite the worst. And further, on H.M.V. DB 2572 this orchestra made recording history many years ago with Bach in D minor. The present performance does not come near that ancient glory, by miles and miles, so why issue it?

The Sibelius issue is very well worth acquiring; Mr. Ormandy's reading is sound, his orchestra at the top of their brilliant form and the recording excellent. The Bach *Toccata and Fugue* and the *Dance of the Seven Veils* are not worth the wax they are pressed on. The *Rosenkavalier* suite is lusciously played, evoking in us an instant nostalgia for the opera, but too noisily recorded. The Johann Strauss records are both excellent in all departments except that Mr. Ormandy's rubato is a bit thick. Highly variegated tempi within a given beat are certainly called for in *Fledermaus* but each lovely tune, within itself, should be allowed to hang together and stretching should stop short of breaking point. Even Strauss (J.) has his elastic limits.

Handel: Sonata in A minor for treble recorder.

Carl Dolmetsch and Joseph Saxby.

Decca K 2175. 4s. 9d.

Stravinsky: Russian Maiden's Song.

Szigeti, acc. composer, and

Pastorale for Violin and Wind Quartet.

Szigeti, Miller, McGinnis, Gassman, Schoenbach, c. composer.

Columbia LX 1174. 6s.

The highly skilled Handel performance is very interesting. But what an endless, arid monotony of tone is achieved within the recorder's tiny range; it leaves the ear hungry. Interesting also is the Stravinsky record—just interesting.

Beethoven: Sonata in C, Op. 2, No. 3.

Solomon.

His Master's Voice C 3847-9. 12s.

*Scarlatti: Sonatas in B minor, L.33, and E, L.430.**

Horowitz.

His Master's Voice DB 6882. 6s.

Schumann: Waldscenen, Op. 82.

Clara Haskil.

Decca AK 2110-1. 9s. 6d.

Debussy: La Cathédrale Engloutie.

Solomon.

His Master's Voice B 9757. 3s. 3d.

* Strongly recommended.

Grieg: *Wedding Day at Troldhaugen*, Op. 65, No. 6, *Solitary Traveller* and *To The Spring*, Op. 43, Nos. 2 and 6.

Gieseking.

Columbia LX 1194. 6s.

Mompou: *Cancion Y Danza* No. 6, and

Alfonso: *Capricho en forma de Bolero*.

Gonzalo Soriano.

His Master's Voice C 3859. 4s.

Both the Solomon recordings are badly made. The third movement trio of Opus 2, No. 3, a lovely arpeggio passage, might have been played on a large harp with no damper. Behind the ill-conceived noise, Solomon is obviously playing well, and a recording of this particular sonata was much needed. The fact that *Cathédrale Engloutie* has been done still again is of no more interest than the fact of its recording failure. Possibly this work cannot be satisfactorily put on wax.

Whilst the Decca recording of *Waldscenen* is not perfect, it is an improvement on their recent piano best and the performance is lovely. Also, although *Vogel als Prophet* and *Einsame Blumen* have appeared often, *Waldscenen* is not available, complete, anywhere else. A recording was needed and this is a good one. Gieseking plays his Grieg with great artistry; Columbia would do better to carry on with his Debussy series.

When Michelangeli (H.M.V. DA 5432) made *Canzone e Danza* we had occasion, in these columns, to draw attention to the merits of Frederico Mompou. The present song and dance is still another one, is equally attractive, and is very beautifully performed. We presume the Alfonso on side two is the famous Barcelonese guitar maestro. He should stick to the guitar.

The Horowitz record is impeccable. Between the reflective L.33 and the rippling L.430 we realize afresh, with this great pianist, what the world's keyboard music owes to the immortal Domenico. More Horowitz on Scarlatti please, and no backsliding on this recording standard!

J. B.

Debussy: *Jeux—Poème Dansé*.

Symphony Orchestra of the Augusteo, Rome, c. Sabata.

His Master's Voice DB 6493-4. 12s.

Without its ballet much of this sounds like a pale aftermath of the middle movement of *La Mer*, without the formal strength of the earlier piece. It is therefore hardly fair to it to put it callously on the gramophone. The performance is very distinguished and the recording adequate.

Ravel: *Pavane pour une infante défunte*.

Boston Symphony Orchestra, c. Koussevitzky.

His Master's Voice DB 6699. 6s.

This is rather too solidly delivered and the tone slightly coarsened in the recording.

Tchaikovsky: *Symphony No. 5 in E minor*, Op. 64.

London Philharmonic Orchestra, c. Celibidache.

Decca AK 2036-41. 28s. 6d.

The L.P.O. is not enough compensation for the waywardness of this conductor's Tchaikovsky. When (as in the case of the Berlin orchestra) one can be content to accept perfect balance, sonority and virtuosity because it is apparently effortless, Celibidache's tricks in such music as this seem to be part of the show. Here the absence of sustaining power and the grossness of the trombone tone spoil the effect, and the vitality of the playing often goes for nought. Especially is this true of the slow movement, which becomes intolerably tedious. The engineers perform excellently.

Sarasate: Zigeunerweisen, Op. 20, No. 1.

Isaac Stern (violin) with orchestra, c. Franz Waxman.

Columbia LX 1156. 6s.

Stern plays brilliantly and the recording is clean: the result is delightful.

*Haydn: String Quartet in D minor, Op. 76, No. 2.**

Bach: Contrapunctus I (Die Kunst der Fuge).

Pascal Quartet.

His Master's Voice DB 6873-5. 18s.

Dvořák: String Quartet in F major, Op. 96.

Griller Quartet.

Decca AK 2080-2. 14s. 3d.

The Haydn, one of his finest quartets, is very well played, decisive and supple. The leader's *vibrato* in the andante is a shade too nervy, but this is not obtrusive. The beautiful Bach fugue is finely transparent and unsentimental in this performance.

The Griller give a somewhat cheapened version of one of Dvořák's feeblest works. If the Scherzo can't get out of F major, that's its own fault: it should never have got into it.

The Decca recording is superior to the H.M.V., which is not of the smoothest.

Beethoven: Pianoforte Sonata in F minor, Op. 57.

Louis Kentner.

Columbia DX 1543-5. 12s.

Liszt: Rhapsodie Espagnol;

Sonetto 104 del Petrarca.

Walter Rehberg.

Decca AK 2066-7. 9s. 6d.

Kentner's performance is altogether too mannered and the music is robbed of its rhythmic cohesion. Time after time the momentum is lost because of some finick of the moment: some of it is sensitively played, but the whole seems emasculate beside Serkin's monumental treatment (HMV C 2879-81). And the recording is not a very great improvement on the old one.

Rehberg is a little too stolid for the Liszt pieces, but both are pleasantly produced. It is a pity that Liszt did not pursue the variation idea in the *Rhapsodie*, which might then have turned into a good *passacaglia*.

*Rossini: "All' idea quel metallo" (Il Barbiere di Siviglia).**

Paolo Silveri (baritone), Luigi Infantino (tenor), Royal Opera House Orchestra, Covent Garden, c. Karl Rankl.

Columbia LX 1157. 6s.

Britten: The Holy Sonnets of John Donne, Op. 35.

Peter Pears (tenor), Benjamin Britten (pianoforte).

His Master's Voice DB 6689-91. 18s.

There is no ulterior purpose in listing these items together. The Rossini record is a sparkling, creditable one, with a remarkably good balance between two very accomplished artists. The orchestral playing is reasonably neat and lively. Britten's *Donne Sonnets* do not compare with the earlier Michelangelo settings, for he seems since to have developed a coldly efficient method of spinning facile patterns. It operates with deadly persistence in the piano parts of these songs, while the vocal writing is often aimless and ungrateful and the declamation sometimes flagrantly insensitive. The recording and performance are both brilliant.

R. S.

* Strongly recommended.

Correspondence

63, Clarendon Way,
Chislehurst.
7th May, 1949.

CONCERNING HANDEL

To the Editor of THE MUSIC REVIEW.

SIR,—May I be allowed to comment on the last paragraph of Mr. Thurston Dart's appreciative review of *Concerning Handel*.

Footnotes and appendices, the absence of which he mentions, are often an annoyance to the reader, and frequently give the impression that they are not of real importance to the narrative. I definitely avoided using them in a work containing so much bibliographical and chronological material, essential to a study of the subjects concerned.

What Mr. Dart means by "the enlightened use of musicological apparatus" I fail to understand, and, if my "style seems severe and aloof" it may not be out of place in a book that is not a piece of imaginative writing, but for the most part a factual work containing a good deal of analysis and argument.

Yours faithfully,
WM. C. SMITH.

84, London Road,
Marlborough, Wilts.

SCHUBERT'S PIANO SONATA IN E MINOR

To the Editor of THE MUSIC REVIEW.

SIR,—In his review of Schubert's piano Sonata in E minor, Mr. Robert Simpson asks—"Were the three movements demonstrably written out as the torso of a sonata, or did Ferdinand [Schubert] assemble them for Whistling's benefit?" The answer is "Yes" to the first part of the question. The manuscript is described by Hans Költzsch as consisting of three movements (Moderato, Allegretto, Scherzo) written on strong, hand-made paper (*Büttenpapier*), somewhat yellowed with age, the staves ruled with a five-pronged pen (*Rastral*) apparently by Schubert himself. It bears the date June, 1817.

But this fact does not, in my opinion, set aside Mr. Simpson's doubts as to whether the second movement as we have it was intended by Schubert to be the slow movement, and to follow the first. In the years 1816-1818 it was frequently Schubert's practice to sketch or complete more than the required four movements of a sonata, and not always in the orthodox order. That is why, for example, Sonata No. 3, which Schubert himself never prepared for publication, contains two scherzi.

Yours faithfully,
MAURICE J. E. BROWN.

Oakfield School,
West Dulwich, S.E.21.
23rd May, 1949.

WOZZECK

To the Editor of THE MUSIC REVIEW.

SIR,—Mr. John Hastings in his article on "Ernest Bloch and Modern Music" (MR X/2) writes that for Bloch all systems such as Schönberg's twelve-tone theory are "a horror", particularly when they "sprain a work of such poignant imagination as the Alban Berg *Wozzeck*, whose romantic psychological impressionism . . . succeeds . . . not because of but in spite of the formula".

Quite apart from the fact that I should have thought it obvious that *Wozzeck* as we know it would never have existed at all had it not been for the twelve-tone theory, Mr. Hastings' opinion of the opera (and I imagine that he must be expressing his own view as well as Bloch's) is so prevalent to-day that I feel it is time to draw attention to M. René Leibowitz's admirable, and for me completely convincing, article in *Horizon*, XVI, 91/1947—"Alban Berg: Or the Seduction to Truth". M. Leibowitz proves that *Wozzeck*, and indeed the whole of Berg's output, while *easier to grasp* (M. Leibowitz's words, my italics) than Schönberg's music, is the quite logical result of the twelve-tone system, and in no way deviates from, or is contrary to his master's strict teaching. The triumph of *Wozzeck* was Schönberg's triumph too.

Yours faithfully,
DONALD MITCHELL.

Cambridge.

15th May, 1949.

HEINRICH SCHENKER

To the Editor of THE MUSIC REVIEW.

SIR,—I should like to add a few points to Michael Mann's essay on Heinrich Schenker, published in your February issue. According to *Kürschners Deutscher Literatur-Kalender*, the biographies of which have always been supplied and corrected yearly by the authors themselves, he was born on 19th June, 1867 (not 1868 as stated by Riemann as well as by Grove) at Wisniowczyki near Podhajce. The birthplace (spelt officially without the final i) lies between Czernowitz and Lemberg in one direction, and between Stanislaw and Tarnopol in the other. (I am spelling the names of these four towns as they were spelt at the time.)—The missing dates of publication are: *Ein Beitrag zur Ornamentik*, Univ. Ed., 1903, and *Joh. Brahms, Oktaven*, etc., Univ. Ed., 1933.

Yours faithfully,

O. E. DEUTSCH.

Craigfryn,

Belmont Avenue,

Bangor, Caerns.

29th May, 1949.

CONSECUTIVE FIFTHS

To the Editor of THE MUSIC REVIEW.

SIR,—Your contributor Matthew Shirlaw makes some sound points in his "Aesthetic—and Consecutive Fifths", but I cannot help feeling that he has ignored one thing—style. This is understandable as nowadays so many people, composers among them, ignore this important element.

Mr. Shirlaw quite rightly castigates the indiscriminate banning of consecutives. However, for tyros, there has to be some system in which there are a certain number of "do's" and "don't's"—this occurs in nearly every subject.

He will probably agree that it is good teaching method to proceed from the known to the unknown, and for this purpose one can assume that the idiom of say Haydn and Mozart is more familiar to a student than any other. In any case it forms a good foundation for a "jumping-off" place. Thus, if we are teaching harmony historically, as I do, let us begin with the vocabulary of Haydn and Mozart, work backwards for a brief period to see what led up to them, and then press on at full speed. It is only in this way that a student will have a sense of "progression". (It must be emphasized that this method is only of use to a student who wants to know "how" before he "does", rather than to anyone who wants to write cleverly and immediately in a modern idiom.)

As the growth of harmony is traced forward we see that the consecutive fifth or octave is foreign to some styles, and it is on these grounds only that they should be banned.

It is a pity that your contributor, in his attempt to expose academic "unreality", should leap from the ninth century to the nineteenth in his article, thereby missing so many clues, both to the reason for the prohibition of consecutives in certain cases, and to the reasons for their return into contemporary style.

Yours faithfully,

R. C. SMITH.

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